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THE

WORKS

OF

WILLIAM PALEY D.D.

Philadelphia

PUBLISHED BY

J. J. Woodward.

THE

WORKS

OF

WILLIAM PALEY, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF CARLISLE.

CONTAINING

HIS LIFE, MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY, EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY NATURAL THEOLOGY, TRACTS, HORÆ PAULINÆ, CLERGYMAN'S COMPANION, AND SERMONS,

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THE

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Of William Paley, whose writings have exerted no inconsiderable influence on the moral and theological opinions of the more enlightened part of the English community, no life has yet appeared that is worthy of the subject, or that gives us a full and satisfactory insight into his character. Though he was known to so many scholars, and had enjoyed a rather enlarged intercourse with the world, but few particulars of his conduct, his manners, and habits, have been detailed, and but few of his sayings recorded. Yet there are few men whose conversation was more varied and instructive; and as he always expressed himself with cogency and perspicuity, our regret is increased that we possess such scanty details of his familiar hours, when the internal state of his mind was exhibited without disguise, when he spoke what he felt, and felt what he spoke.

The best account of Mr. Paley's life, with which we have been hitherto favoured, is by Mr. Meadley, who had not known him till late in life; and who, if he had known him longer and earlier, was hardly capable of analysing his mind, or of estimating his character. Mr. Meadley was a man neither of very enlarged mind, very refined taste, nor very ample information. What he knew, he could relate; but he did not know enough to enable him to give much vivacity to his narrative, or to exhibit in his memoirs the living identity of the writer to whom we are indebted for some of the best moral and theological productions of the last century.

But whatever may be the scantiness of Mr. Meadley's information, his narrative is the most copious which we possess; and as we are not likely soon to be furnished with a richer store, we must be contented with taking his memoirs for our principal guide in the present biographical sketch. We make no boast of novelty. All that we can do is to give a new form to old materials.

William Paley was born at Petersborough, in July 1743. His father was a minor canon in that cathedral; but he relinquished this situation upon being appointed head-master of the grammar school at Giggleswick, in Craven, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Here the family had long resided on a small patrimonial estate. His mother is described as a woman of strong and active mind. At school young Paley soon surpassed the other boys of his age, by superior diligence and abilities. A mind, like his, could not but profit of the opportunities which he possessed for acquiring classical knowledge; but he appears to have been at all times more ambitious of enriching himself with knowledge of other kinds. He was curious in making inquiries about mechanism, whenever an opportunity occurred. His mind was naturally contemplative; and he mingled intellectual activity with corporeal indolence. He never excelled in any of those boyish pastimes which require much dexterity of hand or celerity of foot. But

he appears to have imbibed an early taste for the amusement of fishing; and this taste remained unimpaired, or rather invigorated, to a late period of his life. In one of his portraits he is represented with a fishing rod and line. His cheerfulness and drollery are said to have made him a favourite with his school-fellows. Before he left school he one year attended the assizes at Lancaster, where he is said to have been so much interested by the judicial proceedings he had witnessed, that he introduced them into his juvenile games, and presided over the trials of the other boys.

In November 1758, Paley was admitted a sizer of Christ's College, Cambridge. He proceeded to the University on horseback, in company with his father; and in after-life he thus described the disasters that befell him on the way.

"I was never a good horseman," said he, "and when I followed my father on a pony of my own, on my first journey to Cambridge, I fell off seven times: I was lighter then than I am now; and my falls were not likely to be serious: My father, on hearing a thump, would turn his head half aside, and say—Take care of thy money, lad."

Young Paley did not become a resident member in the University till the October in the year after his matriculation. His father is said to have anticipated his future eminence, and to have remarked, with parental delight, the force and clearness of his intellectual operations.

Mr. Paley took with him to the University such a considerable share of mathematical science, that the mathematical tutor, Mr. Shepherd, excused his attendance at the college lectures with the students of his own year. But he was regularly present at Mr. Backhouse's lectures in logic and metaphysics.

Whatever might be his assiduity in those studies which the discipline of the University required, he had little of the appearance, and none of the affectation, of a hard student. His room was the common resort of the juvenile loungers of his time; but it must be remembered that Mr. Paley possessed the highly desirable power of concentrating his attention in the subject before him; and that he could read or meditate in the midst of noise and tumult with as much facility as if he had been alone. During the first period of his undergraduateship, he was in the habit of remaining in bed till a late hour in the morning, and as he was much in company during the latter part of the day, many wondered how he found leisure for making the requisite accession to his literary stores.

But the mind of Paley was so formed that, in reading, he could rapidly select the kernel and throw away the husk. By a certain quick and almost intuitive process, he discriminated between the essential, and the extraneous matter that were presented to his mind in the books that he perused; and, if he did not read so much as many, he retained more of what he read.

The hilarity and drollery, which Mr. Paley had manifested at school, did not desert him when he entered the University. Thus his company was much sought; and the cumbrousness of his manner, and the general slovenliness of his apparel, perhaps contributed to increase the effect of his jocularity.

When he made his first appearance in the schools, he surprised the spectators by a style of dress, very different from his ordinary habiliments. He exhibited his hair full dressed, with a deep ruffled shirt, and new silk stockings.

When Paley kept his first *act*, one of the theses in support of which he proposed to dispute was, that the eternity of punishments is contrary to the Divine Attributes. But finding that this topic would give offence to the master of his

college, (Dr. Thomas,) he went to Dr. Watson, the moderator, to get it changed. Dr. Watson told him that he might put in *non* before *contradicit*. Mr. Paley, therefore, defended this position, that "Æternitas pœnarum *non* contradicit Divinis Attributis," or that the eternity of punishments is *not* contrary to the Divine Attributes. As he had first proposed to argue against the eternity of future punishments, we may suppose that *that* was his undissembled opinion; and therefore, it would have been more honourable to his candour, to have taken an entirely new question, rather than to have argued in opposition to his real sentiments. Through the whole course of his life, Dr. Paley seemed too willing to support established doctrines; and to find plausible reasons for existing institutions; even in cases in which he must have felt those doctrines to be at variance with truth, and those institutions in opposition to the best interests of mankind. His great and vigorous mind ought to have disdained the petty subterfuges of disingenuous subtlety, and interested sophistication.

Mr. Paley acquired no small celebrity in the University by the ability which he displayed in keeping his first act; and the schools were afterward uniformly crowded when he was expected to dispute. He took his degree of bachelor of arts, in January 1763; and was the senior wrangler of the year.

After taking his bachelor's degree, he became second usher in an academy at Greenwich. Here his office was to teach the Latin language. During his leisure hours he often visited London, and rambled about the metropolis, which affords such numerous opportunities for edifying contemplation to an active and discriminating mind. He pursued knowledge and amusement with equal, or nearly equal, eagerness and avidity. The mind cannot always be kept upon the stretch; and those minds which are capable of great intensity of exertion, seem most to require proportionate relaxation. One of the characteristics of a great mind, is flexibility of attention to a diversity of objects. Mr. Paley attended the play-houses and the courts of justice with similar delight. Every scene furnished him with intellectual aliment.

In 1765, Mr. Paley obtained one of the prizes, which are annually given by the members of the University for the two best dissertations in Latin prose. The subject was, "A Comparison between the Stoic and Epicurean philosophy with respect to the influence of each on the morals of the people." Mr. Paley vindicated the Epicurean side of the question. He had afterward to read his dissertation in the senate-house before the University. His delivery is reported not to have done justice to the merits of the composition.

In June 1766, Mr. Paley was elected fellow of Christ's College. This occasioned his return to the University, where he soon became one of the tutors of his college. Tuition was a province, in which his clear and vigorous understanding, the lucid perspicuity with which he could develope his ideas, and the diversified modes in which he could illustrate his positions, combined with no small share of hilarity and good-humour, rendered him peculiarly qualified to excel. Mr. Law, son of the master of Peterhouse, was his coadjutor in the business of tuition; and the union of so much ability soon raised the fame of the college to an unusual height. The intimacy which was thus cemented between Mr. Paley and Mr. Law, contributed to promote the interest of our author by the friendship to which it led with Mr. Law's father; who, on his elevation to the see of Carlisle, in 1769, made Mr. Paley his chaplain.

In his province of tutor to Christ's College, Mr. Paley lectured on metaphysics,

morals, the Greek Testament, and, subsequently, on divinity. The whole substance of his moral instructions is contained in his Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy; and it is well known that hardly a single idea has found its way into his subsequent publications, which he had not previously promulgated in his lectures.

In his theological lectures, he very judiciously avoided, as much as possible, all matter of polemical strife or sectarian animosity. He used to consider the thirty-nine articles of religion, as mere articles of peace, of which it was impossible that the framers could expect any one person to believe the whole, as they contain altogether about two hundred and forty distinct, and many of them inconsistent, propositions.

Notwithstanding the great liberality of opinion which Mr. Paley exhibited in his lectures, and constantly inculcated upon his pupils, he refused to sign the clerical petition to the House of Commons in 1772, for a relief from subscription to articles of religion, though he approved the object of the petition, and wished to see it accomplished.—Ought he not then to have given the petition the sanction of his name? On this occasion he is reported to have said,—"*I cannot afford to have a conscience;*" but no serious stress ought to be laid on such effusions of jocularity or inconsideration. If all a man's light, humorous, or inadvertent sayings were to be brought up in judgment against him, the purest virtue, and the brightest wisdom, would hardly be able to endure the ordeal. The best and the wisest men are often remarkable for particular inconsistencies.

Though Mr. Paley refused to lend his name to the clerical petition, yet he appears afterward to have vindicated the object which it proposed to obtain, in the defence of a pamphlet written by Bishop Law, entitled, "Considerations on the propriety of requiring a subscription to Articles of Faith." The defence which is just mentioned has been uniformly ascribed to Mr. Paley: and though it must be reckoned among his more juvenile performances, yet it must be allowed, in many instances, to have exhibited a display of ability, and a force of argument, worthy of his more improved judgment, and his more matured abilities.

While Paley was engaged in the office of tuition at Christ's College, his celebrity induced the late Earl Camden to offer him the situation of private tutor to his son. But this was incompatible with his other occupations, and was accordingly declined.

In 1775, Mr. Paley began to receive solid proofs of Bishop Law's regard.—The ecclesiastical patronage, which is attached to the see of Carlisle, is very scanty and poor; but after providing for his son, Bishop Law conferred upon Paley the best benefices which he had to bestow. He was collated to the rectory of Musgrove in Westmoreland, which was at that time worth about £80 a-year. He was soon after presented to the vicarage of Dalston in Cumberland: and on the 5th of September, 1777, he resigned the rectory of Musgrove upon being inducted to the more valuable benefice of Appleby. Whilst he was in possession of this benefice, he published a little work, denominated "The Clergyman's Companion in Visiting the Sick." Such a book was much wanted; and as it contains a judicious selection of prayers for different occasions, it has supplied the clergy with a very useful auxiliary in their devotional occupations.

In 1780, Paley was preferred by his patron, Bishop Law, to a prebendal stall in the cathedral of Carlisle, which was worth about four hundred pounds a-year. And in August, 1782, he was appointed Archdeacon of Carlisle, a sort of sine-

cure, but by which his clerical dignity was increased, and his temporal income enlarged.

In 1785, the period arrived when Mr. Paley, who had hitherto published only a pamphlet, or a few occasional sermons, was to appear as an author in a larger and more substantial form. It was in this year that his Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy issued from the press. This work soon experienced a degree of success, not indeed greater than its general excellence deserves, but greater than any work of merit, on its first appearance, usually receives. In this most useful production Paley exhibits no dazzling novelties, and makes no parade of new discoveries; for what that is new, was likely to be said on such a subject, of which the great principles are coeval with the existence of man upon the habitable globe? But though the matter, of which this work consists, is so old, and has so often been fabricated into a diversity of forms by other writers, yet the capacious mind of Paley has formed it anew into a system in which there is so much clearness in the arrangement, so much cogency in the reasoning, and so much precision in the language, that there is no moral treatise by which it is surpassed in the great merit of general usefulness. Mr. Paley did not make his materials; he found them already made; but his own hands raised the fabric; and of that fabric the merit is all his own.

Some few parts of Mr. Paley's moral, and more of his political reasoning are liable to objections; but with all its defects, his "Moral and Political Philosophy" constitutes a valuable addition to that department of our literature. As it forms one of the lecture books for the students in the University of Cambridge, this circumstance must have tended greatly to augment its circulation, and to extend its usefulness.

In addition to his other honours and emoluments in the see of Carlisle, Mr. Paley was, at the end of the year 1785, appointed chancellor of that diocese. In the year 1787, he lost his venerable friend and patron, the Bishop of Carlisle, who died on the 14th of August, at the advanced age of eighty-four. Bishop Law was an honest and intrepid inquirer after truth; and though he was inferior to his younger friend in intellectual energy, yet it would have made no small addition to Paley's fame, if he had equalled his affectionate and revered patron in the fearless declaration of all his theological opinions.

It is highly honourable to Paley that he was among the first of those, who expressed a decided opinion against the iniquity of the slave-trade. What he wrote on that subject, and particularly his unreserved reprobation of the abominable traffic, in his Moral Philosophy, contributed very much to accelerate the abolition. It was, for a long time, a mere question of interest with a considerable part of the community; but moral considerations, in unison with the amiable spirit of the gospel, and the tender sympathies of humanity, at length triumphed over the sordid projects of avarice and cruelty.

Mr. Paley, much to his honour, suggested a plan for promoting the civilization of Africa, and for making some restitution to that outraged continent, for the cruelty, the injustice, and the oppression, which it had so long experienced. He proposed to export from the United States of America several little colonies of free Negroes, and to settle them in different parts of Africa, that they might serve as patterns of more civilized life to the natives in their several vicinities.

In the year 1790, Mr. Paley published his Horæ Paulinæ, in which he appears to have displayed more originality of thought, more sagacity of remark, and

more delicacy of discrimination, than in any of his other works. The great object of this volume is to illustrate and enforce the credibility of the Christian revelation, by showing the numerous coincidences between the Epistles of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles. These coincidences, which are often incorporated or intertwined in references and allusions, in which no art can be discovered, and no contrivance traced, furnish numerous proofs of the truth of both these works, and consequently of that of Christianity. The Epistles of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles mutually strengthen each other's credibility; and Mr. Paley has shown, in the clearest manner, how one borrows light from the other; and how both conjunctively reflect the splendour of their united evidence on some of the principal facts and most important truths in the memoirs of the Evangelists.

Some of the coincidences which Mr. Paley discovers, seem too minute for common observation; but his remarks show their importance, while they evince the keenness of his intellectual sight. The merit of this performance, though it has been generally acknowledged both at home and abroad, is even yet greater than the celebrity it has acquired, or the praise it has received.

In 1790, Mr. Paley delivered an excellent charge to the clergy of the diocese of Carlisle, in which he forcibly recommended them to imitate the example of Christ, in the adaptation of their sermons to local circumstances, to times and seasons, and to the general state of mind in their several congregations. Much of the efficacy of preaching depends upon the observance of this rule.

In May 1791, Mr. Paley had the misfortune to be left a widower, with four sons and four daughters. In the following year, the dean and chapter of Carlisle added the vicarage of Addingham, near Great Salkeld, to his other ecclesiastical preferments. In the same year he published his *Reasons for Contentment*, which he addressed to the labouring classes of society. This work appeared at a time when the principles of the French revolution had been widely disseminated, and when the richer part of the community, terrified almost into idiocy by the wild alarms of Burke, and the sonorous declamations of Pitt, trembled with a sort of paralytic horror for the security of their property. They fondly imagined, that it was the great object of the poorer class of reformers to divide the possessions of the rich; and thus to attempt not merely to establish a political equality of rights, but a substantial equality of fortunes. Some few fanatics might have cherished such a delusion, and might have entertained such a wish, without being aware that it was only one of those frantic chimeras of a distempered brain which could never be accomplished. Inequality in the mental and physical powers of individuals is the order of nature, or rather the appointment of God; and consequently no equality of circumstances is ever possible to be realised. If it could be established to-day, it would be altered to-morrow.

It is hardly to be supposed that Mr. Paley really believed that a large body of the people ever designed to equalize, or had actually conspired to equalize, the whole mass of private property, and thus subvert the foundations of the social scheme by establishing a community of goods. But, whatever might be Mr. Paley's real opinions on the political temper of the times, and on the perils to which rank and property seemed exposed, this pamphlet, which he addressed to the labouring classes, proves, that he had placed himself on the list of the alarmists of that stormy period. Was Mr. Paley anxious to rest the permanence of his future fame on his larger works, while he made use of this trivial pamphlet

to procure an ephemeral applause? or, did he deliberately labour to accomplish some secular project by seconding the wishes of the court, and promoting the views of the minister?—If the real object of Mr. Paley, in writing this two-penny political pamphlet, which consists of some common-place truisms, clearly developed and forcibly expressed, were to place a mitre upon his brow, the attempt proved abortive, and the wish vain. Mr. Pitt was, no doubt, pleased in seeing a great mind like that of Paley bending to act in subserviency to his will, and co-operating in augmenting the delusion under which the nation was at that time mistaking its bane for its good, and pursuing its ruin for its interest. But though Mr. Pitt loved and rewarded flexibility of opinion, it is well known that he loved and rewarded it most, *where it was accompanied with mediocrity of talent.* The haughty premier, in his treatment both of Watson and Paley, showed, that he had no fondness for intellectual superiority; and he seems to have been particularly studious not to elevate any mind that might wrestle with his own.

In 1793, Mr. Paley vacated the benefice of Dalston, and was inducted to that of Stanwix, which was more in the vicinity of Carlisle. He assigned the following reasons to a clerical friend for assenting to this change:—"First, (said he,) it saved me double housekeeping, as Stanwix was within twenty minutes' walk of my house in Carlisle; secondly, it was fifty pounds a year more in value; and, thirdly, I began to find my stock of sermons coming over again too fast."

The most popular of Mr. Paley's theological works appeared in the year 1794, under the title of a "View of the Evidences of Christianity." The author showed great wisdom in not mingling any controversial ingredients in the body of this work, and in not connecting the facts of the Christian Scriptures with any doctrinal matter of doubtful authority or ambiguous interpretation. He has thus added very much to the usefulness of his labours, and has rendered them acceptable to a greater number of readers. If he has not silenced every gainsayer, or converted every infidel, he has at least established many in the faith, and has induced some to study the evidences of revelation, who were previously disposed to reject it without examination. Mr. Paley is less compressed than Grotius, and less diffuse than Lardner; but he is more convincing than either, and more luminous than both. His reasoning is every where remarkable for its cogency, and his statement for its perspicuity. There are several works which evince more research, but there are none so well calculated for general perusal, and, consequently, general utility.

Mr. Paley was, in a pecuniary point of view, better rewarded for his Evidences of Christianity than for any of his other works. The minister of the day, indeed, showed no willingness to put a mitre on his head, but three bishops seemed to vie with each other in remunerating him for his labours in vindicating the truth of the Scriptures, and serving the cause of the church. The then bishop of London, Porteus, gave him a prebendal stall in St. Paul's. The bishop of Lincoln made him the subdean of that diocese; and the bishop of Durham presented him with the valuable living of Bishop Wearmouth. These several pieces of preferment amounted to considerably more than two thousand pounds a-year. It would be well for the church, if the episcopal patronage were always equally well bestowed, or if it were always made equally subservient to the remuneration of learning, to the cause of piety, and the interests of truth. After being installed as subdean of Lincoln, Mr. Paley proceeded to Cambridge to take his degree of Doctor of Divinity. In the *Concio ad clerum* which he preached on the occasion,

he unfortunately pronounced the word *profŭgus*, *profūgus*, which was noticed by one of the University wits in the following epigram:

Italiam fato *profŭgus* Lavinaque venit
Litora
Errat Virgilius, forte *profūgus* erat.

Neither Paley nor Watson, both of whom had received their classical instruction at private schools in the country, ever attained to an accurate knowledge of quantity, or to a familiar acquaintance with the rules of prosody. Watson says, that it often cost him more pains to recollect the right quantity of a few Latin words than to solve a difficult problem in mathematics. But both Paley and Watson aspired to higher intellectual excellence than that of classical erudition. Paley was, indeed, by no means deficient in Greek or Roman literature. He had enough for his purpose, but he had no superfluity.

Of Mr. Paley's occasional sermons, not the least memorable is that which he preached before the University of Cambridge, when he returned thither for the purpose of completing the exercises for his doctor's degree. In this discourse he expatiates with much force of expression and shrewdness of remark on the dangers incidental to the clerical character. He shows how the constant repetition of the same devotional labours is apt to diminish the sensibility to religious impressions; and he notices, with great truth, the moral perils to which even a secluded and contemplative life is exposed. The clergy are earnestly admonished, that it is their duty to make their own devotion contribute to augment that of their congregation, while it is instrumental in improving their own hearts, and saving their own souls.

At Bishop Wearmouth, where Dr. Paley fixed his residence in 1795, he found one of the best parsonage houses in the kingdom, and associated with every accommodation which he could desire. In order to avoid all dissension with his parishioners, he granted them a lease of the tithes for his life. In his Moral Philosophy he had represented tithes as injurious to cultivation and improvement; and he now acted, as far as circumstances would permit, in conformity to his opinions. As the produce of land was considerably augmented in price soon after this period, and the value of landed property in general experienced an extraordinary advance, Dr. Paley's tenants had reason to congratulate themselves on the good bargains they had made, and to extol his forbearance and moderation.

The growing prosperity of his parishioners and his tenants was a source of unfeigned satisfaction to Dr. Paley; and he never regretted the opportunities of gain which he had lost, or by which they had been enriched. It seems to manifest a higher degree of virtue cordially to rejoice at the prosperity of others, than to sympathise with their adversities and sufferings.

In December 1795, Dr. Paley took for his second wife a Miss Dobinson, of Carlisle, whose friendship he had long enjoyed, and whose worth he had long known. His office of subdean of Lincoln obliged him to reside in that city for three months in the beginning of the year; and he accordingly now divided his time between Lincoln and Bishop Wearmouth. At both places he maintained the relations of social intercourse with his neighbours without any affectation of superiority; and practised the rights of hospitality without any ostentation. He did not disdain the amusement of the card-table, and was partial to a game at

whist. When a lady once remarked to him, "that the only excuse for their playing was, that it served to kill time:"—"The best defence possible (replied he,) though time will, in the end, kill us." Dr. Paley possessed as much of what the French call "*savoir vivre*," as most men. He knew how to make the most of life, with all its diversified concomitants; and there were few even of its less pleasurable accessories from which he knew not how to extract some lesson of usefulness, or some particles of enjoyment.

In order to enlarge his sphere of doing good, and to comply with the wishes of the Bishop of Durham, Dr. Paley consented to act in the commission of the peace. Mr. Meadley has informed us, that in discharging these functions, he was blamed for his irascibility and impatience. No ordinary tranquillity of mind is requisite in investigating the wants, ascertaining the claims, or composing the bickerings, of the poor.

Dr. Paley enjoyed the singular happiness of having his parents live to witness his celebrity, and to rejoice at his success. His mother did not die till March 1796, at the age of eighty-three; and his father survived her till September 1799, when he reached the more advanced period of eighty-eight.

In 1800, Dr. Paley experienced a violent paroxysm of some nephralgic complaint, which returned with increased exacerbations during the next and the following year, and by which he was agonised for longer or shorter intervals during the remainder of his life. His last, and, perhaps, greatest work, entitled "Natural Theology," was principally composed during the period in which he was subject to attacks of this terrible malady. These attacks must occasionally have impeded the progress of the work; but it is probable that he had been long previously revolving the materials in his mind. In this, as well as in his other publications, he has made large use of the labours of others; but he has illuminated what they left obscure, enriched what was jejune, amplified what was scanty, invigorated what was weak, and condensed what was diffuse. The proofs which he adduces of the Divine Attributes, are clear and cogent, and calculated to carry conviction to every capacity. These proofs are not so arranged as to distract by the multiplicity of the parts, or to confound by the enormity of the mass. They consist of a few simple expositions, but of such a nature as to interest every reader, and to edify both the young and the old in the prosecution of the argument. Natural theology can never be dull or uninteresting when it is occupied in illustrating the perfections of the Deity by his works, and does not diverge into the subtleties of metaphysics, or lose itself in the labyrinths of interminable speculation.

Dr. Paley was never more at home than in the composition of this work. The materials, with which he was furnished by what he had read, and by what he had observed, were so various and ample, that it was more difficult for him to select than to amplify, to methodise than to vary, and to compress than to dilate.—Though the proofs of the Divine power and wisdom are so many, so vast, and so luminous, that they hardly need any explanation, yet there is no one who can peruse the demonstrative evidence which Dr. Paley has produced of these attributes, without being more deeply impressed with the sentiment of their presence than he was before.

The chapter on the Divine Goodness, though it evinces strong marks of the same unclouded and powerful intellect that predominates in other parts of the work, is perhaps upon the whole less copious and satisfactory than the rest. The

evidence in this division of the subject is, in fact, more perplexed by conflicting arguments, and more exposed to contradictory conclusions. Dr. Paley has well remarked, that when we consider the benevolence of the Deity, we can consider it only in relation to sensitive beings. Without this reference the term has no meaning; for it would otherwise be without any medium through which it could operate, by which its influence could be felt, or its presence ascertained. Gross matter, as long as it remains inanimate and insentient, can never be an object of good or evil, of pleasure or of pain. It is alike unconscious of the one and the other. But, while the arguments for the power and wisdom of the Deity are so completely satisfactory as not to leave a doubt upon the mind, yet there are various appearances which seem hardly compatible with the idea of unlimited benevolence, and which it is difficult to accord with that supposition, except by travelling out of this visible diurnal sphere, and connecting the present life with a life beyond the grave. That the plurality and the preponderance of sensations in all the different classes of beings is in favour of happiness, cannot reasonably be denied; but if pain and misery are the lot of many, or only of a few, for a whole life, or even for short intervals, the argument recurs, how is this partial or temporary suffering to be reconciled to the theory of Infinite Benevolence? If pain and misery exist in instances collectively numerous, or in portions however minute, yet vast in the aggregate, how is this to be reconciled with the attribute of Unbounded Goodness, unless we connect an eternity of existence with the present transient scene? If evil exists, it is hardly a satisfactory solution of the difficulty to say, that it is not an object of contrivance, when the world is so constituted that it is more or less one of the ingredients, or accessories, in the condition of all sensitive beings. If the evil is not a part of the original intent, it seems an adjunct that cannot be disjoined from the present scheme; and if it be an adjunct of the present scheme, that scheme cannot be said to be a proof of Infinite Benevolence, unless we consider it only as part of a greater whole, and infer that the present is only the commencement of our sensitive and reflective existence.

In the works of human genius or industry, the object of the contrivance may differ from the effect, owing to the imperfection of the human faculties; but when we consider the operations of the Divine Mind, we cannot separate the object and the end; or say that one thing was designed and another produced, without impeaching the Supreme Power of weakness, or the Supreme Intellect of inconsistency. If in any particular contrivances in the creation, good was the object while evil is the result, can we reverentially affirm, that God willed one thing, but that a different was produced? If God is the author of all things, the evil must be regarded as much his contrivance as the good. If God made the teeth, he made them to ache as well as to masticate. The good of mastication is the principal object of the contrivance, but is not the evil of aching the occasional effect? In considering the sensitive works of the Great Creator in the present world, all that we can truly say is, that good, or pleasure, is the PREDOMINANT design, the primary object, but that evil, or pain, is one of the concomitant effects, or subordinate accessories. There is too much good in the world to admit the supposition of malevolence in the Great Author of the scheme; and there is too much evil not to lead us to expect a state of future retribution. Those phenomena in the present state of things, which militate against the theory of Infinite Benevolence, appear to be only presages of the good that is to come. If

the good even here greatly predominates over the evil, it is reasonable to infer, that in some future period the evil will disappear, and the Divine Benevolence be resplendent, without any apparent spot or limitation, in the condition of every individual.

In the commencement of the year 1805, while Dr. Paley was resident at Lincoln, he experienced a violent paroxysm of his agonising malady, which could not be appeased by the usual remedies; and symptoms appeared that his end was approaching. He languished, however, in a state of debility and disease, till the period of his return to Bishop Wearmouth, where he expired on the 25th of May. His mental faculties suffered little, if any, diminution to the last moment of his existence; but if his intellectual vision underwent no eclipse, his corporeal sight is said to have failed for a few days before his death.

It cannot be said of Dr. Paley that he lived in vain!—His was a mind of great powers; and in general he employed it for the noblest ends. He was particularly active in diffusing that knowledge which tends most to exalt the dignity of man; and raise him highest in the scale of virtue and intelligence. His moral and theological works reflect the highest honour on his memory; and if he betrayed a little seeming political versatility in smaller and more ephemeral productions, we may find some apology for his inconsistency in the times in which he lived; in his solicitude for the welfare of a large family; and in circumstances of which few have sufficient energy to control the agency or to resist the influence.

In person, Dr. Paley was above the middle size, and latterly inclined to corpulence. The best likeness of him is by Romney, in which he is drawn with a fishing-rod in his hand. As in his domestic arrangements, and in his general habits of expense, he practised what may be called an enlightened economy, and observed a due medium between parsimony and profusion, his income was more than adequate to all his wants; and he left his family in easy if not in affluent circumstances.

A volume of sermons was published after the death of Dr. Paley, which he left by his will to be distributed among his parishioners. In clearness of expression, in harmony of style, and in force of moral sentiment, some parts of these sermons are equal if not superior to any of his other works. In the pulpit he was one of those preachers who excelled in bringing the most important truths home to men's interests and bosoms.—Though a few will rejoice, yet the majority of readers will lament, that in these sermons the author has abandoned his usual reserve with respect to certain doctrinal matters, which it is more easy to find in the liturgy and the articles of the church, than in the precepts of Christ, or the writings of the Evangelists.—Those doctrines which tend only to engender strife and to produce vain logomachies, would always be better omitted in the pulpit; and it is greatly to be deplored that in these sermons Dr. Paley has sanctioned their introduction. The great end of the commandment is charity; but can these doctrines conduce to that end? If this question had been proposed to Dr. Paley, it is not difficult to conjecture what would have been his reply, if that reply had been in unison with his unsophisticated sentiments.

The reader will perhaps not be displeased, if we add to this biographical sketch of Dr. Paley the following interesting anecdote, which he related to a friend at Cambridge, in the year 1795, while they were conversing on the early part of his academical life.

"I spent the first two years of my undergraduateship," said he, "happily, but unprofitably. I was constantly in society, where we were not immoral, but idle, and rather expensive. At the commencement of my third year, however, after having left the usual party at rather a late hour in the evening, I was awakened at five in the morning by one of my companions, who stood at my bed-side, and said, 'Paley, I have been thinking what a d****d fool you are. I could do nothing, probably, were I to try, and can afford the life I lead: you could do every thing, and cannot afford it. I have had no sleep during the whole night on account of these reflections, and am now come solemnly to inform you, that if you persist in your indolence, I must renounce your society.' I was so struck," Dr. Paley continued, "with the visit and the visitor, that I lay in bed great part of the day and formed my plan. I ordered my bed-maker to prepare my fire every evening, in order that it might be lighted by myself. I arose at five; read during the whole of the day, except during such hours as chapel and hall required, alloting to each portion of time its peculiar branch of study; and just before the closing of gates (nine o'clock) I went to a neighbouring coffee-house, where I constantly regaled upon a mutton chop and a dose of milk punch. And thus, on taking my bachelor's degree, I became senior wrangler."

Anecdotes of this kind, which have something of the marvellous, are seldom related with a punctilious adherence to truth: but if here be no erroneous statement, or inaccurate representation, Mr. Meadley appears to ascribe too much to the occurrence, when he attributes to it "not only his (Paley's) successful labours as a college tutor, but the invaluable productions of his pen." A mind like that of Paley could not have been long so indolent as is represented, without some compunctious visitings of remorse. It is more than probable that when he first received this friendly admonition, his bosom was a prey to some lurking pangs of self-condemnation; and he was consequently predisposed instantly to put in force a plan of more systematic and more vigorous application. Where the matter of combustion already exists, a little spark will set it in a blaze.

PREFACE.

In the treatises that I have met with upon the subject of *morals*, I appear to myself to have remarked the following imperfections;—either that the principle was erroneous, or that it was indistinctly explained, or that the rules deduced from it were not sufficiently adapted to real life and to actual situations. The writings of Grotius, and the larger work of Puffendorff, are of too *forensic* a cast, too much mixed up with the civil law and with the jurisprudence of Germany, to answer precisely the design of a system of ethics,—the direction of private consciences in the general conduct of human life. Perhaps, indeed, they are not to be regarded as institutes of morality calculated to instruct an individual in his duty, so much as a species of law books and law authorities, suited to the practice of those courts of justice, whose decisions are regulated by general principles of natural equity, in conjunction with the maxims of the Roman code; of which kind, I understand, there are many upon the Continent. To which may be added, concerning both these authors, that they are more occupied in describing the rights and usages of independent communities, than is necessary in a work which professes not to adjust the correspondence of nations, but to delineate the offices of domestic life. The profusion also of classical quotations with which many of their pages abound, seems to me a fault from which it will not be easy to excuse them. If these extracts be intended as decorations of style, the composition is overloaded with ornaments of one kind. To any thing more than ornament they can make no claim. To propose them as serious arguments, gravely to attempt to establish or fortify a moral duty by the testimony of a Greek or Roman poet, is to trifle with the attention of the reader, or rather to take it off from all just principles of reasoning in morals.

Of our own writers in this branch of philosophy, I find none that I think perfectly free from the three objections which I have stated. There is likewise a fourth property observable almost in all of them, namely, that they divide too much the law of Nature from the precepts of Revelation; some authors industriously declining the mention of Scripture authorities, as belonging to a different province; and others reserving them for a separate volume; which appears to me much the same defect, as if a commentator on the laws of England should content himself with stating upon each head the common law of the land, without taking any notice of acts of parliament; or should choose to give his readers the common law in one book, and the statute law in another. "When the obligations of morality are taught," says a pious and celebrated writer, "let the sanctions of Christianity never be forgotten: by which it will be shown that they give strength and lustre to each other; religion will appear to be the voice of reason, and morality will be the will of God."*

The *manner* also in which modern writers have treated of subjects of morality, is, in my judgment, liable to much exception. It has become of late a fashion to deliver moral institutes in strings or series of detached propositions, without subjoining a continued argument or regular dissertation to any of them. The sententious apophthegmatizing style, by crowding propositions and paragraphs too fast upon the mind, and by carrying the eye of the reader from subject to subject in too quick a succession, gains not a sufficient hold upon the attention, to leave either the memory furnished, or the understanding satisfied. However useful a syllabus of topics or a series of propositions may be in the hands of a lecturer, or as a guide to a student, who is supposed to consult other books, or to institute upon each subject researches of his own, the method is by no means convenient for ordinary readers; because few readers are such *thinkers* as to want only a hint to set their thoughts at work upon; or such as will pause and tarry at every proposition, till they have traced out its dependency, proof, relation, and consequences, before they permit themselves to step on to another. A respectable writer of this class† has comprised his doctrine of slavery in the three following propositions:—

"No one is born a slave; because every one is born with all his original rights."

"No one can become a slave; because no one from being a person can, in the language of the Roman law, become a thing, or subject of property."

"The supposed property of the master in the slave, therefore, is matter of usurpation, not of right."

It may be possible to deduce from these few adages, such a theory of the primitive rights of human nature, as will evince the illegality of slavery: but surely an author requires too much of his reader, when he expects him to make these deductions for himself; or to supply, perhaps from some remote chapter of the same treatise, the several proofs and explanations which are necessary to render the meaning and truth of these assertions intelligible.

* Preface to "The Preceptor," by Dr. Johnson.

† Dr. Fergusson, author of "Institutes of Moral Philosophy." 1767.

There is a fault, the opposite of this, which some moralists who have adopted a different, and I think a better plan of composition, have not always been careful to avoid; namely, the dwelling upon verbal and elementary distinctions, with a labour and prolixity proportioned much more to the subtlety of the question, than to its value and importance in the prosecution of the subject. A writer upon the law of nature,* whose explications in every part of philosophy, though always diffuse, are often very successful, has employed three long sections in endeavouring to prove that "permissions are not laws." The discussion of this controversy, however essential it might be to dialectic precision, was certainly not necessary to the progress of a work designed to describe the duties and obligations of civil life. The reader becomes impatient when he is detained by disquisitions which have no other object than the settling of terms and phrases; and, what is worse, they for whose use such books are chiefly intended, will not be persuaded to read them at all.

I am led to propose these strictures, not by any propensity to depreciate the labours of my predecessors, much less to invite a comparison between the merits of their performances and my own; but solely by the consideration, that when a writer offers a book to the public upon a subject on which the public are already in possession of many others, he is bound, by a kind of literary justice, to inform his readers, distinctly and specifically, what it is he professes to supply, and what he expects to improve. The imperfections above enumerated, are those which I have endeavoured to avoid or remedy. Of the execution the reader must judge; but this was the design.

Concerning the *principle* of morals it would be premature to speak; but concerning the manner of unfolding and explaining that principle, I have somewhat which I wish to be remarked. An experience of nine years in the office of a public tutor in one of the universities, and in that department of education to which these chapters relate, afforded me frequent occasions to observe, that in discoursing to young minds upon topics of morality, it required much more pains to make them perceive the difficulty, than to understand the solution: that, unless the subject was so drawn up to a point, as to exhibit the full force of an objection, or the exact place of a doubt, before any explanation was entered upon,—in other words, unless some curiosity was excited before it was attempted to be satisfied, the labour of the teacher was lost. When information was not desired, it was seldom, I found, retained. I have made this observation my guide in the following work: that is, upon each occasion I have endeavoured, before I suffered myself to proceed in the disquisition, to put the reader in complete possession of the question; and to do it in the way that I thought most likely to stir up his own doubts and solicitude about it.

In pursuing the principle of morals through the detail of cases to which it is applicable, I have had in view to accommodate both the choice of the subjects and the manner of handling them, to the situations which arise in the life of an inhabitant of this country in these times. This is the thing that I think to be principally wanting in former treatises; and perhaps the chief advantage which will be found in mine, I have examined no doubts, I have discussed no obscurities, I have encountered no errors, I have adverted to no controversies, but what I have seen actually to exist. If some of the questions treated of, appear to a more instructed reader minute or puerile, I desire such reader to be assured that I have found them occasions of difficulty to young minds; and what I have observed in young minds, I should expect to meet with in all who approach these subjects for the first time. Upon each article of human duty, I have combined with the conclusions of reason the declarations of Scripture, when they are to be had, as of co-ordinate authority, and as both terminating in the same sanctions.

In the manner of the work, I have endeavoured so to attemper the opposite plans above animadverted upon, as that the reader may not accuse me either of too much haste, or too much delay. I have bestowed upon each subject enough of dissertation to give a body and substance to the chapter in which it is treated of, as well as coherence and perspicuity: on the other hand, I have seldom, I hope, exercised the patience of the reader by the length and prolixity of my essays, or disappointed that patience at last by the tenuity and unimportance of the conclusion.

There are two particulars in the following work, for which it may be thought necessary that I should offer some excuse. The first of which is, that I have scarcely ever referred to any other book; or mentioned the name of the author whose thoughts, and sometimes, possibly, whose very expressions I have adopted. My method of writing has constantly been this: to extract what I could from my own stores and my own reflections in the first place; to put down that, and afterwards to consult upon each subject such readings as fell in my way: which order, I am convinced, is the only one whereby any person can keep his thoughts from sliding into other men's trains. The effect of such a plan upon the production itself will be, that, whilst some parts in matter or manner may be new, others will be little else than a repetition of the old. I make no pretensions to perfect originality: I claim to be something more than a mere compiler. Much, no doubt, is borrowed; but the fact is, that the notes for this work having been prepared for some years, and such things having been from time to time inserted in them as appeared to me worth preserving, and such insertions made commonly without the name of the author from whom they were taken, I should, at this time, have found a difficulty in recovering those names with sufficient exactness to be able to render to every man his own. Nor, to speak the truth, did it appear to me worth while to repeat the search merely for this purpose. When authorities are relied upon, names must be produced; when a discovery has been made in science, it may be unjust to borrow the invention without acknowledging the author. But in an argumentative treatise, and upon a subject which allows no place for discovery or invention, properly so called; and in which all that can belong to a writer is his mode of

* Dr Rutherforth, author of "Institutes of Natural Law."

reasoning, or his judgment of probabilities; I should have thought it superfluous, had it been easier to me than it was, to have interrupted my text, or crowded my margin, with references to every author whose sentiments I have made use of. There is, however, one work to which I owe so much, that it would be ungrateful not to confess the obligation: I mean the writings of the late Abraham Tucker, Esq. part of which were published by himself, and the remainder since his death, under the title of "The Light of Nature pursued, by Edward Search, Esq." I have found in this writer more original thinking and observation upon the several subjects that he has taken in hand, than in any other, not to say, than in all others put together. His talent also for illustration is unrivalled. But his thoughts are diffused through a long, various, and irregular work. I shall account it no mean praise, if I have been sometimes able to dispose into method, to collect into heads and articles, or to exhibit in more compact and tangible masses, what in that otherwise excellent performance, is spread over too much surface.

The next circumstance for which some apology may be expected, is the joining of moral and political philosophy together, or the addition of a book of politics to a system of ethics. Against this objection, if it be made one, I might defend myself by the example of many approved writers, who have treated *de officiis hominis et civis*, or, as some choose to express it, "of the rights and obligations of man, in his individual and social capacity," in the same book. I might allege, also, that the part a member of the commonwealth shall take in political contentions, the vote he shall give, the counsels he shall approve, the support he shall afford, or the opposition he shall make, to any system of public measures,—is as much a question of personal duty, as much concerns the conscience of the individual who deliberates, as the determination of any doubt which relates to the conduct of private life; that consequently political philosophy is, properly speaking, a continuation of moral philosophy; or rather indeed a part of it, supposing moral philosophy to have for its aim the information of the human conscience in every deliberation that is likely to come before it. I might avail myself of these excuses, if I wanted them; but the vindication upon which I rely is the following:—In stating the principle of morals, the reader will observe that I have employed some industry in explaining the theory, and showing the necessity of *general rules;* without the full and constant consideration of which, I am persuaded that no system of moral philosophy can be satisfactory or consistent. This foundation being laid, or rather this habit being formed, the discussion of political subjects, to which, more than to almost any other, general rules are applicable, became clear and easy. Whereas, had these topics been assigned to a distinct work, it would have been necessary to have repeated the same rudiments, to have established over again the same principles, as those which we had already exemplified, and rendered familiar to the reader, in the former parts of this. In a word, if there appear to any one too great a diversity, or too wide a distance, between the subjects treated of in the course of the present volume, let him be reminded, that the doctrine of general rules, pervades and connects the whole.

It may not be improper, however, to admonish the reader, that, under the name of *politics*, he is not to look for those occasional controversies, which the occurrences of the present day, or any temporary situation of public affairs, may excite; and most of which, if not beneath the dignity, it is beside the purpose, of a philosophical institution to advert to. He will perceive that the several disquisitions are framed with a reference to the condition of this country, and of this government; but it seemed to me to belong to the design of a work like the following, not so much to discuss each altercated point with the particularity of a political pamphlet upon the subject, as to deliver those universal principles, and to exhibit that mode and train of reasoning in politics, by the due application of which every man might be enabled to attain to just conclusions of his own. I am not ignorant of an objection that has been advanced against all abstract speculations concerning the origin, principle, or limitation of civil authority; namely, that such speculations possess little or no influence upon the conduct either of the state or of the subject, of the governors or the governed; nor are attended with any useful consequences to either: that in times of tranquillity they are not wanted; in times of confusion they are never heard. This representation, however, in my opinion, is not just. Times of tumult, it is true, are not the times to learn; but the choice which men make of their side and party, in the most critical occasions of the commonwealth, may nevertheless depend upon the lessons they have received, the books they have read, and the opinions they have imbibed, in seasons of leisure and quietness. Some judicious persons, who were present at Geneva, during the troubles which lately convulsed that city, thought they perceived, in the contentions there carrying on, the operation of that political theory, which the writings of Rosseau, and the unbounded esteem in which these writings are holden by his countrymen, had diffused amongst the people. Throughout the political disputes that have within these few years taken place in Great Britain, in her sister-kingdom, and in her foreign dependencies, it was impossible not to observe, in the language of party, in the resolutions of public meetings, in debate, in conversation, in the general strain of those fugitive and diurnal addresses to the public which such occasions call forth, the prevalency of those ideas of civil authority which are displayed in the works of Mr. Locke. The credit of that great name, the courage and liberality of his principles, the skill and clearness with which his arguments are proposed, no less than the weight of the arguments themselves, have given a reputation and currency to his opinions, of which I am persuaded, in any unsettled state of public affairs, the influence would be felt. As this is not a place for examining the truth or tendency of these doctrines, I would not be understood by what I have said, to express any judgment concerning either. I mean only to remark, that such doctrines are not without effect; and that it is of *practical* importance to have the principles from which the obligations of social union, and the extent of civil obediency, are derived, rightly explained, and well understood.

Indeed, as far as I have observed, in political, beyond all other subjects, where men are without some fundamental and scientific principles to resort to, they are liable to have their understandings played upon by cant phrases and unmeaning terms, of which every party in every country possesses a vocabulary. We appear astonished when we see the multitude led away by sounds; but we should remember that, if sounds work miracles, it is always upon ignorance. The influence of names is in exact proportion to the want of knowledge.

These are the observations with which I have judged it expedient to prepare the attention of my reader. Concerning the personal motives which engaged me in the following attempt, it is not necessary that I say much; the nature of my academical situation, a great deal of leisure since my retirement from it, the recommendation of an honoured and excellent friend, the authority of the venerable prelate to whom these labours are inscribed, the not perceiving in what way I could employ my time or talents better, and my disapprobation, in literary men, of that fastidious indolence which sits still because it disdains to do *little*, were the considerations that directed my thoughts to this design. Nor have I repented of the undertaking. Whatever be the fate or reception of this work, it owes its author nothing. In sickness and in health I have found in it that which can alone alleviate the one, or give enjoyment to the other,—occupation and engagement.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND EDMUND LAW, D. D.

LORD BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

My lord,—Had the obligations which I owe to your Lordship's kindness been much less, or much fewer, than they are; had personal gratitude left any place in my mind for deliberation or for inquiry; in selecting a name which every reader might confess to be prefixed with propriety to a work, that, in many of its parts, bears no obscure relation to the general principles of natural and revealed religion, I should have found myself directed by many considerations, to that of the Bishop of Carlisle. A long life spent in the most interesting of all human pursuits—the investigation of moral and religious truth, in constant and unwearied endeavours to advance the discovery, communication, and success of both; a life so occupied, and arrived at that period which renders every life venerable, commands respect by a title which no virtuous mind will dispute, which no mind sensible of the importance of these studies to the supreme concernments of mankind will not rejoice to see acknowledged. Whatever difference, or whatever opposition, some who peruse your Lordship's writings may perceive between your conclusions and their own, the good and wise of all persuasions will revere that industry, which has for its object the illustration or defence of our common Christianity. Your Lordship's researches have never lost sight of one purpose, namely, to recover the simplicity of the Gospel from beneath that load of unauthorized additions, which the ignorance of some ages, and the learning of others, the superstition of weak, and the craft of designing men, have (unhappily for its interest) heaped upon it. And this purpose, I am convinced, was dictated by the purest motive; by a firm, and I think a just opinion, that whatever renders religion more rational, renders it more credible; that he who, by a diligent and faithful examination of the original records, dismisses from the system one article which contradicts the apprehension, the experience, or the reasoning of mankind, does more towards recommending the belief, and, with the belief, the influence of Christianity, to the understandings and consciences of serious inquirers, and through them to universal reception and authority, than can be effected by a thousand contenders for creeds and ordinances of human establishment.

When the doctrine of Transubstantiation had taken possession of the Christian world, it was not without the industry of learned men, that it came at length to be discovered, that no such doctrine was contained in the New Testament. But had those excellent persons done nothing more by their discovery, than abolished an innocent superstition, or changed some directions in the ceremonial of public worship, they had merited but little of that veneration with which the gratitude of Protestant Churches remembers their services. What they did for mankind, was this: they exonerated Christianity of a weight which sunk it. If indolence or timidity had checked these exertions, or suppressed the fruit and publication of these inquiries, is it too much to affirm, that infidelity would at this day have been universal?

I do not mean, my Lord, by the mention of this example to insinuate, that any popular opinion which your Lordship may have encountered, ought to be compared with Transubstantiation, or that the assurance with which we reject that extravagant absurdity, is attainable in the controversies in which your Lordship has been engaged; but I mean, by calling to mind those great reformers of the public faith, to observe, or rather to express my own persuasion, that to restore the purity, is most effectually to promote the progress, of Christianity; and that the same virtuous motive which hath sanctified their labours, suggested yours. At a time when some men appear not to perceive any good, and others

to suspect an evil tendency, in that spirit of examination and research which is gone forth in Christian countries, this testimony is become due, not only to the probity of your Lordship's views, but to the general cause of intellectual and religious liberty.

That your Lordship's life may be prolonged in health and honour; that it may continue to afford an instructive proof, how serene and easy old age can be made by the memory of important and well-intended labours, by the possession of public and deserved esteem, by the presence of many grateful relatives; above all, by the resources of religion, by an unshaken confidence in the designs of a "faithful Creator," and a settled trust in the truth and in the promises of Christianity; is the fervent prayer of, my Lord, your Lordship's dutiful, most obliged, and most devoted servant,

WILLIAM PALEY.

Carlisle, Feb. 10, 1785.

MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

BOOK I.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

Definition and use of the Science.

Moral Philosophy, Morality, Ethics, Casuistry, Natural Law, mean all the same thing; namely, *that science which teaches men their duty and the reasons of it.*

The use of such a study depends upon this, that, without it, the rules of life, by which men are ordinarily governed, oftentimes mislead them, through a defect, either in the rule, or in the application.

These rules are, the Law of Honour, the Law of the Land, and the Scriptures.

CHAPTER II.

The Law of Honour.

The Law of Honour is a system of rules constructed by people of fashion, and calculated to facilitate their intercourse with one another; and for no other purpose.

Consequently, nothing is adverted to by the Law of Honour, but what tends to incommode this intercourse.

Hence this law only prescribes and regulates the duties *betwixt equals;* omitting such as relate to the Supreme Being, as well as those which we owe to our inferiors. For which reason, profaneness, neglect of public worship or private devotion, cruelty to servants, rigorous treatment of tenants or other dependants, want of charity to the poor, injuries done to tradesmen by insolvency, or delay of payment, with numberless examples of the same kind, are accounted no breaches of honour; because a man is not a less agreeable companion for these vices, nor the worse to deal with, in those concerns which are usually transacted between one gentleman and another.

Again; the Law of Honour, being constituted by men occupied in the pursuit of pleasure, and for the mutual conveniency of such men, will be found, as might be expected from the character and design of the law-makers, to be, in most instances, favourable to the licentious indulgence of the natural passions. Thus it allows of fornication, adultery, drunkenness, prodigality, duelling, and of revenge in the extreme; and lays no stress upon the virtues opposite to these.

CHAPTER III.

The Law of the Land.

That part of mankind, who are beneath the Law of Honour, often make the Law of the Land their rule of life; that is, they are satisfied with themselves, so long as they do or omit nothing, for the doing or omitting of which the law can punish them.

Whereas every system of human laws, considered as a rule of life, labours under the two following defects;

I. Human laws omit many duties, as not objects of compulsion; such as piety to God, bounty to the poor, forgiveness of injuries, education of children, gratitude to benefactors.

The law never speaks but to command, nor commands but where it can compel: consequently, those duties, which by their nature must be *voluntary*, are left out of the statute book, as lying beyond the reach of its operation and authority.

II. Human laws permit, or which is the same thing, suffer to go unpunished, many crimes, because they are incapable of being defined by any previous description. Of which nature are luxury, prodigality, partiality in voting at those elections in which the qualifications of the candidate ought to determine the success, caprice in the disposition of men's fortunes at their death, disrespect to parents, and a multitude of similar examples.

For, this is the alternative: either the law must define beforehand, and with precision, the offences which it punishes; or it must be left to the *discretion* of the magistrate, to determine upon each particular accusation, whether it constitute that offence which the law designed to punish, or not; which is, in effect, leaving to the magistrate to punish, or not to punish, at his pleasure, the individual who is brought before him; which is just so much tyranny. Where, therefore, as in the instances above mentioned, the distinction between right and wrong is of too subtile, or of too secret, a nature, to be ascertained by any preconcerted language, the law of most countries, especially of free states, rather than commit the liberty of the subject to the discretion of the magistrates, leaves men in such cases to themselves.

CHAPTER IV.

The Scriptures.

WHOEVER expects to find in the Scriptures a specific direction for every moral doubt that arises, looks for more than he will meet with. And to what a magnitude such a detail of particular precepts would have enlarged the sacred volume, may be partly understood from the following consideration:—The laws of this country, including the acts of the legislature, and the decisions of our supreme courts of justice, are not contained in a fewer than fifty folio volumes. And yet it is not once in ten attempts that you can find the case you look for, in any law book whatever: to say nothing of those numerous points of conduct, concerning which the law professes not to prescribe or determine any thing. Had theu the same particularity, which obtains in human laws so far as they go, been attempted in the Scriptures, throughout the whole extent of morality, it is manifest they would have been by much too bulky to be either read or circulated; or rather, as St. John says, "even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

Morality is taught in Scripture in this wise.—General rules are laid down, of piety, justice, benevolence, and purity: such as worshiping God in spirit and in truth; doing as we would be done by; loving our neighbour as ourself; forgiving others, as we expect forgiveness from God; that mercy is better than sacrifice; that not that which entereth into a man, (nor, by parity of reason, any ceremonial pollutions,) but that which proceedeth from the heart, defileth him. These rules are occasionally illustrated, either by *fictitious examples*, as in the parable of the good Samaritan; and of the cruel servant, who refused to his fellow-servant that indulgence and compassion which his master had shown to him: *or in instances which actually presented themselves*, as in Christ's reproof of his disciples at the Samaritan village; his praise of the poor widow, who cast in her last mite; his censure of the Pharisees, who chose out the chief rooms,—and of the tradition, whereby they evaded the command to sustain their indigent parents: or, *lastly, in the resolution of questions, which those who were about our Saviour proposed to him;* as his answer to the young man who asked him, "What lack I yet?" and to the honest scribe, who had found out, even in that age and country, that "to love God and his neighbour, was more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifice."

And this is in truth the way in which all practical sciences are taught, as Arithmetic, Grammar, Navigation, and the like.—Rules are laid down, and examples are subjoined: not that these examples are the cases, much less all the cases, which will actually occur; but by way only of explaining the principle of the rule, and as so many specimens of the method of applying it.—The chief difference is, that the examples in Scripture are not annexed to the rules with the didactic regularity to which we are now-a-days accustomed, but delivered dispersedly, as particular occasions suggested them; which gave them, however, (especially to those who heard them, and were present to the occasions which produced them,) an energy and persuasion, much beyond what the same or any instances would have appeared with, in their places in a system.

Besides this, the Scriptures commonly pre-suppose in the person to whom they speak, a knowledge of the principles of natural justice; and are employed not so much to teach *new* rules of morality, as to enforce the practice of it by *new* sanctions, and by a *greater certainty;* which last seems to be the proper business of a revelation from God, and what was most wanted.

Thus the "unjust, covenant-breakers, and extortioners," are condemned in Scripture, supposing it known, or leaving it, where it admits of doubt, to moralists to determine, what injustice, extortion, or breach of covenant, are.

The above considerations are intended to prove that the Scriptures do not supersede the use of the science of which we profess to treat, and at the same time to acquit them of any charge of imperfection or insufficiency on that account.

CHAPTER V.

The Moral Sense.

"The father of *Caius Toranius* had been proscribed by the triumvirate. *Caius Toranius* coming over to the interests of that party, discovered to the officers, who were in pursuit of his father's life, the place where he concealed himself, and gave them withal a description, by which they might distinguish his person, when they found him. The old man, more anxious for the safety and fortunes of his son, than about the little that might remain of his own life, began immediately to inquire of the officers who seized him, whether his son was well, whether he had done his duty to the satisfaction of his generals. 'That son (replied one of the officers,) so dear to thy affections, betrayed thee to us; by his information thou art apprehended, and diest.' The officer with this, struck a poniard to his heart, and the unhappy parent fell, not so much affected by his fate, as by the means to which he owed it."*

Now the question is, whether, if this story were related to the wild boy caught, some years ago, in the woods of Hanover, or to a savage without experience, and without instruction, cut off in his infancy from all intercourse with his species, and, consequently, under no possible influence of example, authority, education, sympathy or habit; whether, I say, such a one would feel, upon the relation, any degree of *that sentiment of disapprobation of Toranius's conduct* which we feel, or not?

They who maintain the existence of a moral sense; of innate maxims; of a natural conscience; that the love of virtue and hatred of vice are instinctive; or the perception of right and wrong intuitive; (all which are only different ways of expressing the same opinion,) affirm that he would.

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* "Caius Toranius triumvirum partes secutus, proscripti patris sui prætorii et ornati viri latebras, ætatem, notasque corporis, quibus agnosci posset, centurionibus edidit, qui eum, persecuti sunt. Senex de filii magis vita et incrementis, quam de reliquo spiritu suo sollicitus, an incolumis esset, et an imperatoribus satisfaceret, interrogare eos coepit. E quibus unus: 'Ab illo,' inquit, 'quem tantopere diligis, demonstratus nostro ministerio, filii indicio occideris:' protinusque pectus ejus gladio trajecit. Collapsus itaque est infelix, auctore cædis, quam ipsa cæde, miserior."—VALER. MAX. lib. ix. cap. 11.

They who deny the existence of a moral sense, &c. affirm that he would not.

And upon this, issue is joined.

As the experiment has never been made, and, from the difficulty of procuring a subject (not to mention the impossibility of proposing the question to him, if we had one,) is never likely to be made, what would be the event, can only be judged of from probable reasons.

They who contend for the affirmative, observe, that we approve examples of generosity, gratitude, fidelity, &c. and condemn the contrary, instantly, without deliberation, without having any interest of our own concerned in them, oft-times without being conscious of, or able to give any reason for, our approbation: that this approbation is uniform and universal, the same sorts of conduct being approved and disapproved in all ages and countries of the world; circumstances, say they, which strongly indicate the operation of an instinct or moral sense.

On the other hand, answers have been given to most of these arguments, by the patrons of the opposite system: and,

First, as to the *uniformity* above alleged, they controvert the fact. They remark, from authentic accounts of historians and travellers, that there is scarcely a single vice which, in some age or country of the world, has not been countenanced by public opinion: that in one country, it is esteemed an office of piety in children to sustain their aged parents; in another to dispatch them out of the way: that suicide, in one age of the world, has been heroism, is in another felony: that theft, which is punished by most laws, by the laws of Sparta was not unfrequently rewarded: that the promiscuous commerce of the sexes, although condemned by the regulations and censure of all civilized nations, is practised by the savages of the tropical regions without reserve, compunction, or disgrace: that crimes, of which it is no longer permitted us even to speak, have had their advocates amongst the sages of very renowned times: that, if an inhabitant of the polished nations of Europe be delighted with the appearance, wherever he meets with it, of happiness, tranquillity, and comfort, a wild American is no less diverted with the writhings and contortions of a victim at the stake: that even amongst ourselves, and in the present improved state of moral knowledge, we are far from a perfect consent in our opinions or feelings: that you shall hear duelling alternately reprobated and applauded, according to the sex, age or station, of the person you converse with: that the forgiveness of injuries and insults is accounted by one sort of people magnanimity, by another meanness: that in the above instances, and perhaps in most others, moral approbation follows the fashions and institutions of the country we live in; which fashions also, and institutions themselves, have grown out of the exigences, the climate, situation, or local circumstances of the country; or have been set up by the authority of an arbitrary chieftain, or the unaccountable caprice of the multitude: all which, they observe, looks very little like the steady hand and indelible characters of Nature. But,

Secondly, because, after these exceptions and abatements, it cannot be denied but that some sorts of actions command and receive the esteem of mankind more than others; and that the approbation of them is general though not universal: as to this they say, that the general approbation of virtue, even in instances where we have no interest of our own to induce us to it, may be accounted for without the assistance of a moral sense; thus:

"Having experienced, in some instances, a particular conduct to be beneficial to ourselves, or observed that it would be so, a sentiment of approbation rises up in our minds; which sentiment afterwards accompanies the idea or mention of the same conduct, although the private advantage which first excited it no longer exist."

And this continuance of the passion, after the reason of it has ceased, is nothing more, say they, than what happens in other cases; especially in the love of money, which is in no person so eager, as it is oftentimes found to be in a rich old miser, without family to provide for, or friend to oblige by it, and to whom, consequently, it is no longer (and he may be sensible of it too) of any real use or value; yet is this man as much overjoyed with gain, and mortified by losses, as he was the first day he opened his shop, and when his very subsistence depended upon his success in it.

By these means the custom of approving certain actions *commenced:* and when once such a custom hath got footing in the world, it is no difficult thing to explain how it is transmitted and continued; for *then* the greatest part of those who approve of virtue, approve of it from authority, by imitation, and from a habit of approving such and such actions, inculcated in early youth, and receiving, as men grow up, continual accessions of strength and vigour, from censure and encouragement, from the books they read, the conversations they hear, the current application of epithets, the general turn of language, and the various other causes by which it universally comes to pass, that a society of men, touched in the feeblest degree with the same passion, soon communicate to one another a great degree of it.* This is the case with most of us at present; and is the cause also, that the *process of association*, described in the last paragraph but one, is little now either perceived or wanted.

Amongst the causes assigned for the continuance and diffusion of the same moral sentiments amongst mankind, we have mentioned *imitation.*

The efficacy of this principle is most observable in children: indeed, if there be any thing in them, which deserves the name of an *instinct*, it is their *propensity to imitation.* Now there is nothing which children imitate or apply more readily than expressions of affection and aversion, of approbation, hatred, resentment, and the like; and when these passions and expressions are once connected, which they soon will be by the same association which unites words with their ideas, the passion will follow the expression, and attach upon the object to which the child has been accustomed to apply the epithet. In a word, when almost every thing else is learned by *imitation*, can we wonder

* "From instances of popular tumults, seditions, factions, panics, and of all passions which are shared with a multitude, we may learn the influence of society, in exciting and supporting any emotion; while the most ungovernable disorders are raised, we find, by that means, from the slightest and most frivolous occasions. He must be more or less than man, who kindles not in the common blaze. What wonder then, that moral sentiments are found of such influence in life, though springing from principles, which may appear, at first sight, somewhat small and delicate?"—*Hume's Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Sect. ix. p. 326.

to find the same cause concerned in the generation of our moral sentiments?

Another considerable objection to the system of moral instincts is this, that there are no maxims in the science which can well be deemed *innate*, as none perhaps can be assigned, which are absolutely and universally *true*; in other words, which do not *bend* to circumstances. Veracity, which seems, if any be, a natural duty, is *excused* in many cases towards an enemy, a thief, or a madman. The obligation of promises, which is a first principle in morality, depends upon the circumstances under which they were made; they may have been unlawful, or become so since, or inconsistent with former promises, or erroneous, or extorted; under all which cases, instances may be suggested, where the obligation to perform the promise would be very dubious; and so of most other general rules, when they come to be actually applied.

An argument has been also proposed on the same side of the question, of this kind. Together with the instinct, there must have been implanted, it is said, a clear and precise idea of the object upon which it was to attach. The instinct and the idea of the object are inseparable even in imagination, and as necessarily accompany each other as any correlative ideas whatever: that is, in plainer terms, if we be prompted by nature to the approbation of particular actions, we must have received also from nature a distinct conception of the action we are thus prompted to approve; which we certainly have not received.

But as this argument bears alike against all instincts, and against their existence in brutes as well as in men, it will hardly, I suppose, produce conviction, though it may be difficult to find an answer to it.

Upon the whole, it seems to me, either that there exist no such instincts as compose what is called the moral sense, or that they are not now to be distinguished from prejudices and habits; on which account they cannot be depended upon in moral reasoning: I mean that it is not a safe way of arguing, to assume certain principles as so many dictates, impulses, and instincts of nature, and then to draw conclusions from these principles, as to the rectitude or wrongness of actions, independent of the tendency of such actions, or of any other consideration whatever.

Aristotle lays down, as a fundamental and self-evident maxim, that nature intended barbarians to be slaves; and proceeds to deduce from this maxim a train of conclusions, calculated to justify the policy which then prevailed. And I question whether the same maxim be not still self-evident to the company of merchants trading to the coast of Africa.

Nothing is so soon made, as a maxim; and it appears from the example of Aristotle, that authority and convenience, education, prejudice, and general practice, have no small share in the making of them; and that the laws of custom are very apt to be mistaken for the order of nature.

For which reason, I suspect, that a system of morality, built upon instincts, will only find out reasons and excuses for opinions and practices already established,—will seldom correct or reform either.

But further, suppose we admit the existence of these instincts; what, it may be asked, is their authority? No man, you say, can act in deliberate opposition to them, without a secret remorse of conscience. But this remorse may be borne with: and if the sinner choose to bear with it, for the sake of the pleasure or the profit which he expects from his wickedness; or finds the pleasure of sin to exceed the remorse of conscience, of which he alone is the judge, and concerning which, when he feels them both together, he can hardly be mistaken, the moral-instinct man, so far as I can understand, has nothing more to offer.

For if he allege that these instincts are so many indications of the will of God, and consequently presages of what we are to look for hereafter; this, I answer, is to resort to a rule and a motive ulterior to the instincts themselves, and at which rule and motive we shall by-and-by arrive by a surer road:—I say *surer*, so long as there remains a controversy whether there be any instinctive maxims at all; or any difficulty in ascertaining what maxims are instinctive.

This celebrated question therefore becomes in our system a question of pure curiosity; and as such, we dismiss it to the determination of those who are more inquisitive, than we are concerned to be, about the natural history and constitution of the human species.

CHAPTER VI.

Human Happiness.

The word *happy* is a relative term; that is, when we call a man happy, we mean that he is happier than some others, with whom we compare him; than the generality of others; or than he himself was in some other situation: thus, speaking of one who has just compassed the object of a long pursuit,—"Now," we say, "he is happy;" and in a like comparative sense, compared, that is, with the general lot of mankind, we call a man happy who possesses health and competency.

In strictness, any condition may be denominated happy, in which the amount or aggregate of pleasure exceeds that of pain; and the degree of happiness depends upon the quantity of this excess.

And the greatest quantity of it ordinarily attainable in human life, is what we mean by happiness, when we inquire or pronounce what human happiness consists in.*

* If any *positive* signification, distinct from what we mean by pleasure, can be affixed to the term "happiness," I should take it to denote a certain state of the nervous system in that part of the human frame in which we feel joy and grief, passions and affections.—Whether this part be the heart, which the turn of most languages would lead us to believe, or the diaphragm, as Buffon, or the upper orifice of the stomach, as Van Helmont thought; or rather be a kind of fine net-work, lining the whole region of the præcordia, as others have imagined; it is possible, not only that each painful sensation may violently shake and disturb the fibres at the time, but that a series of such may at length so derange the very texture of the system, as to produce a perpetual irritation, which will show itself by fretfulness, impatience, and restlessness. It is possible also, on the other hand, that a succession of pleasurable sensations may have such an effect upon this subtile organization, as to cause the fibres to relax, and return into their place and order, and thereby to recover, or, if not lost, to preserve, that harmonious conformation which gives to the mind its sense of complacency and satisfaction. This state may be denominated happiness, and is so far distinguishable from pleasure, that it does

In which inquiry I will omit much usual declamation on the dignity and capacity of our nature; the superiority of the soul to the body, of the rational to the animal part of our constitution; upon the worthiness, refinement, and delicacy, of some satisfactions, or the meanness, grossness, and sensuality, of others; because I hold that pleasures differ in nothing, but in continuance and intensity: from a just computation of which, confirmed by what we observe of the apparent cheerfulness, tranquillity, and contentment, of men of different tastes, tempers, stations, and pursuits, every question concerning human happiness must receive its decision.

It will be our business to show, if we can,

I. What Human Happiness does not consist in:

II. What it does consist in.

First, then, Happiness does not consist in the pleasures of sense, in whatever profusion or variety they be enjoyed. By the pleasures of sense, I mean, as well as the animal gratifications of eating, drinking, and that by which the species is continued, as the more refined pleasures of music, painting, architecture, gardening, splendid shows, theatric exhibitions; and the pleasures, lastly, of active sports, as of hunting, shooting, fishing, &c. For,

1st, These pleasures continue but a little while at a time. This is true of them all, especially of the grosser sort of them. Laying aside the preparation and the expectation, and computing strictly the actual sensation, we shall be surprised to find how inconsiderable a portion of our time they occupy, how few hours in the four-and-twenty they are able to fill up.

2dly, These pleasures, by repetition, lose their relish. It is a property of the machine, for which we know no remedy, that the organs, by which we perceive pleasure, are blunted and benumbed by being frequently exercised in the same way. There is hardly any one who has not found the difference between a gratification, when new, and when familiar; or any pleasure which does not become indifferent as it grows habitual.

3dly, The eagerness for high and intense delights takes away the relish from all others; and as such delights fall rarely in our way, the greater part of our time becomes, from this cause, empty and uneasy.

There is hardly any delusion by which men are greater sufferers in their happiness, than by their expecting too much from what is called pleasure; that is, from those intense delights, which vulgarly engross the name of pleasure. The very expectation spoils them. When they do come, we are often engaged in taking pains to persuade ourselves how much we are pleased, rather than enjoying any pleasure which springs naturally out of the object. And whenever we depend upon being vastly delighted, we always go home secretly grieved at missing our aim. Likewise, as has been observed just now, when this humour of being prodigiously delighted has once taken hold of the imagination, it hinders us from providing for, or acquiescing in, those gently soothing engagements, the due variety and succession of which are the only things that supply a vein or continued stream of happiness.

What I have been able to observe of that part of mankind, whose professed pursuit is pleasure, and who are withheld in the pursuit by no restraints of fortune, or scruples of conscience, corresponds sufficiently with this account. I have commonly remarked in such men, a restless and inextinguishable passion for variety; a great part of their time to be vacant, and so much of it irksome; and that, with whatever eagerness and expectation they set out, they become, by degrees, fastidious in their choice of pleasure, languid in the enjoyment, yet miserable under the want of it.

The truth seems to be, that there is a limit at which these pleasures soon arrive, and from which they ever afterwards decline. They are by necessity of short duration, as the organs cannot hold on their emotions beyond a certain length of time; and if you endeavour to compensate for this imperfection in their nature by the frequency with which you repeat them, you suffer more than you gain, by the fatigue of the faculties, and the diminution of sensibility.

We have said nothing in this account, of the loss of opportunities, or the decay of faculties, which, whenever they happen, leave the voluptuary destitute and desperate; teased by desires that can never be gratified, and the memory of pleasures which must return no more.

It will also be allowed by those who have experienced it, and perhaps by those alone, that pleasure which is purchased by the encumbrance of our fortune, is purchased too dear; the pleasure never compensating for the perpetual irritation of embarrassed circumstances.

These pleasures, after all, have their value: and as the young are always too eager in their pursuit of them, the old are sometimes too remiss, that is, too studious of their ease, to be at the pains for them which they really deserve.

Secondly, Neither does happiness consist in an exemption from pain, labour, care, business, suspense, molestation, and "those evils which are without;" such a state being usually attended, not with ease, but with depression of spirits, a tastelessness in all our ideas, imaginary anxieties, and the whole train of hypochondriacal affections.

For which reason, the expectations of those, who retire from their shops and counting-houses, to enjoy the remainder of their days in leisure and tranquillity, are seldom answered by the effect; much less of such, as, in a fit of chagrin, shut themselves up in cloisters and hermitages, or quit the world, and their stations in it, for solitude and repose.

Where there exists a known external cause of uneasiness, the cause may be removed, and the uneasiness will cease. But those imaginary distresses which men feel for want of real ones (and which are equally tormenting, and so far equally real) as they depend upon no single or assignable subject of uneasiness, admit oftentimes of no application of relief.

Hence, a moderate pain, upon which the attention may fasten and spend itself, is to many a refreshment; as a fit of the gout will sometimes cure the spleen. And the same of any less violent

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not refer to any particular object of enjoyment, or consist, like pleasure, in gratification of one or more of the senses, but is rather the secondary effect which such objects and gratifications produce upon the nervous system, or the state in which they leave it. These conjectures belong not, however, to our province. The comparative sense, in which we have explained the term Happiness, is more popular, and is sufficient for the purpose of the present chapter.

agitation of the mind, as a literary controversy, a law-suit, a contested election, and, above all, gaming; the passion for which, in men of fortune and liberal minds, is only to be accounted for on this principle.

Thirdly: Neither does happiness consist in greatness, rank, or elevated station.

Were it true that all superiority afforded pleasure, it would follow, that by how much we were the greater, that is, the more persons we were superior to, in the same proportion, so far as depended upon this cause, we should be the happier; but so it is, that no superiority yields any satisfaction, save that which we possess or obtain over those with whom we immediately compare ourselves. The shepherd perceives no pleasure in his superiority over his dog; the farmer, in his superiority over the shepherd; the lord, in his superiority over the farmer; nor the king, lastly, in his superiority over the lord. Superiority, where there is no competition, is seldom contemplated; what most men are quite unconscious of.

But if the same shepherd can run, fight, or wrestle better than the peasants of his village; if the farmer can show better cattle, if he keep a better horse, or be supposed to have a longer purse, than any farmer in the hundred; if the lord have more interest in an election, greater favour at court, a better house, or a larger estate than any nobleman in the country; if the king possess a more extensive territory, a more powerful fleet or army, a more splendid establishment, more loyal subjects, or more weight and authority in adjusting the affairs of nations, than any prince in Europe; in all these cases, the parties feel an actual satisfaction in their superiority.

Now the conclusion that follows from hence is this; that the pleasures of ambition, which are supposed to be peculiar to high stations, are in reality common to all conditions. The farrier who shoes a horse better, and who is in greater request for his skill, than any man within ten miles of him, possesses, for all that I can see, the delight of distinction and of excelling, as truly and substantially as the statesman, the soldier, and the scholar, who have filled Europe with the reputation of their wisdom, their valour, or their knowledge.

No superiority appears to be of any account, but superiority over a rival. This, it is manifest, may exist wherever rivalships do; and rivalships fall out amongst men of all ranks and degrees. The object of emulation, the dignity or magnitude of this object, makes no difference; as it is not what either possesses that constitutes the pleasure, but what one possesses more than the other.

Philosophy smiles at the contempt with which the rich and great speak of the petty strifes and competitions of the poor; not reflecting that these strifes and competitions are just as reasonable as their own, and the pleasure, which success affords, the same.

Our position is, that happiness does not consist in greatness. And this position we make out by showing, that even what are supposed to be peculiar advantages of greatness, the pleasures of ambition and superiority, are in reality common to all conditions. But whether the pursuits of ambition be ever wise, whether they contribute more to the happiness or misery of the pursuers, is a different question; and a question concerning which we may be allowed to entertain great doubt. The pleasure of success is exquisite; so also is the anxiety of the pursuit, and the pain of disappointment;—and what is the worst part of the account, the pleasure is short-lived. We soon cease to look back upon those whom we have left behind; new contests are engaged in; new prospects unfold themselves; a succession of struggles is kept up, whilst there is a rival left within the compass of our views and profession; and when there is none, the pleasure with the pursuit is at an end.

II. We have seen what happiness does not consist in. We are next to consider in what it does consist.

In the conduct of life, the great matter is, to know beforehand, what will please us, and what pleasure will hold out. So far as we know this, our choice will be justified by the event. And this knowledge is more scarce and difficult than at first sight it may seem to be: for sometimes, pleasures, which are wonderfully alluring and flattering in the prospect, turn out in the possession extremely insipid; or do not hold out as we expected: at other times, pleasures start up which never entered into our calculation; and which we might have missed of by not foreseeing:—whence we have reason to believe, that we actually do miss of many pleasures from the same cause. I say, to know "beforehand;" for, after the experiment is tried, it is commonly impracticable to retreat or change; beside that shifting and changing is apt to generate a habit of restlessness, which is destructive of the happiness of every condition.

By the reason of the original diversity of taste, capacity, and constitution, observable in the human species, and the still greater variety, which habit and fashion have introduced in these particulars, it is impossible to propose any plan of happiness, which will succeed to all, or any method of life which is universally eligible or practicable.

All that can be said is, that there remains a presumption in favour of those conditions of life, in which men generally appear most cheerful and contented. For though the apparent happiness of mankind be not always a true measure of their real happiness, it is the best measure we have.

Taking this for my guide, I am inclined to believe that happiness consists,

I. In the exercise of the social affections.

Those persons commonly possess good spirits, who have about them many objects of affection and endearment, as wife, children, kindred, friends. And to the want of these may be imputed the peevishness of monks, and of such as lead a monastic life.

Of the same nature with the indulgence of our domestic affections, and equally refreshing to the spirits, is the pleasure which results from acts of bounty and beneficence, exercised either in giving money, or imparting to those who want it, the assistance of our skill and profession.

Another main article of human happiness is,

II. The exercise of our faculties, either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some engaging end.

It seems to be true, that no plenitude of present gratifications can make the possessor happy for a continuance, unless he have something in reserve, —something to hope for, and look forward to.— This I conclude to be the case, from comparing the alacrity and spirits of men who are engaged in any pursuit which interests them, with the dejection and *ennui* of almost all, who are either

born to so much that they want nothing more, or who have *used up* their satisfactions too soon, and drained the sources of them.

It is this intolerable vacuity of mind, which carries the rich and great to the horse-course and the gaming-table; and often engages them in contests and pursuits, of which the success bears no proportion to the solicitude and expense with which it is sought. An election for a disputed borough shall cost the parties twenty or thirty thousand pounds each,—to say nothing of the anxiety, humiliation, and fatigue, of the canvass; when, a seat in the house of commons, of exactly the same value, may be had for a tenth part of the money, and with no trouble. I do not mention this, to blame the rich and great (perhaps they cannot do better,) but in confirmation of what I have advanced.

Hope, which thus appears to be of so much importance to our happiness, is of two kinds;—where there is something to be done towards attaining the object of our hope, and where there is nothing to be done. The first alone is of any value; the latter being apt to corrupt into impatience, having no power but to sit still and wait, which soon grows tiresome.

The doctrine delivered under this head, may be readily admitted; but how to provide ourselves with a succession of pleasurable engagements, is the difficulty. This requires two things: judgment in the choice of *ends* adapted to our opportunities; and a command of imagination, so as to be able, when the judgment has made choice of an end, to transfer a pleasure to the *means:* after which, the end may be forgotten as soon as we will.

Hence those pleasures are most valuable, not which are most exquisite in the fruition, but which are most productive of engagement and activity in the pursuit.

A man who is in earnest in his endeavours after the happiness of a future state, has, in this respect, an advantage over all the world: for, he has constantly before his eyes an object of supreme importance, productive of perpetual engagement and activity, and of which the pursuit (which can be said of no pursuit besides) lasts him to his life's end. Yet even he must have many ends, besides the *far end:* but then they will conduct to that, be subordinate, and in some way or other capable of being referred to that, and derive their satisfaction, or an addition of satisfaction, from that.

Engagement is every thing: the more significant, however, our engagements are, the better: such as the planning of laws, institutions, manufactures, charities, improvements, public works; and the endeavouring, by our interest, address, solicitations, and activity, to carry them into effect; or, upon a smaller scale, the procuring of a maintenance and fortune for our families by a course of industry and application to our callings, which forms and gives motion to the common occupations of life; training up a child; prosecuting a scheme for his future establishment; making ourselves masters of a language or a science; improving or managing an estate; labouring after a piece of preferment; and, lastly, *any* engagement, which is innocent, is better than none; as the writing of a book, the building of a house, the laying out of a garden, the digging of a fish-pond,—even the raising of a cucumber or a tulip.

Whilst our minds are taken up with the objects or business before us, we are commonly happy, whatever the object or business be; when the mind is *absent*, and the thoughts are wandering to something else than what is passing in the place in which we are, we are often miserable.

III. Happiness depends upon the prudent constitution of the habits.

The art in which the secret of human happiness in a great measure consists, is to *set* the habits in such a manner, that every change may be a change for the better. The habits themselves are much the same; for, whatever is made habitual, becomes smooth, and easy, and nearly indifferent. The return to an old habit is likewise easy, whatever the habit be. Therefore the advantage is with those habits which allow of an indulgence in the deviation from them. The luxurious receive no greater pleasures from their dainties, than the peasant does from his bread and cheese: but the peasant, whenever he goes abroad, finds a feast; whereas the epicure must be well entertained, to escape disgust. Those who spend every day at cards, and those who go every day to plough, pass their time much alike: intent upon what they are about, wanting nothing, regretting nothing, they are both for the time in a state of ease: but then, whatever suspends the occupation of the card-player, distresses him; whereas to the labourer, every interruption is a refreshment: and this appears in the different effects that Sunday produces upon the two, which proves a day of recreation to the one, but a lamentable burthen to the other. The man who has learned to live alone, feels his spirits enlivened whenever he enters into company, and takes his leave without regret; another, who has long been accustomed to a crowd, or continual succession of company, experiences in company no elevation of spirits, nor any greater satisfaction, than what the man of a retired life finds in his chimney-corner. So far their conditions are equal; but let a change of place, fortune, or situation, separate the companion from his circle, his visitors, his club, common-room, or coffee-house; and the difference and advantage in the choice and constitution of the two habits will show itself. Solitude comes to the one, clothed with melancholy; to the other, it brings liberty and quiet. You will see the one fretful and restless, at a loss how to dispose of his time, till the hour come round when he may forget himself in bed; the other easy and satisfied, taking up his book or his pipe, as soon as he finds himself alone; ready to admit any little amusement that casts up, or to turn his hands and attention to the first business that presents itself; or content, without either, to sit still, and let his train of thought glide indolently through his brain, without much use, perhaps, or pleasure, but without *hankering* after any thing better, and without irritation. A reader, who has inured himself to books of science and argumentation, if a novel, a well-written pamphlet, an article of news, a narrative of a curious voyage, or a journal of a traveller, fall in his way, sits down to the repast with relish; enjoys his entertainment while it lasts, and can return, when it is over, to his graver reading, without distaste. Another, with whom nothing will go down but works of humour and pleasantry, or whose curiosity must be interested by perpetual novelty, will consume a bookseller's window in half a forenoon; during which time he is rather in search of diversion than diverted; and as books to his taste are

few, and short, and rapidly read over, the stock is soon exhausted, when he is left without resource from his principal supply of harmless amusement.

So far as circumstances of fortune conduce to happiness, it is not the income which any man possesses, but the increase of income, that affords the pleasure. Two persons, of whom one begins with a hundred, and advances his income to a thousand pounds a year, and the other sets off with a thousand and dwindles down to a hundred, may, in the course of their time, have the receipt and spending of the same sum of money: yet their satisfaction, so far as fortune is concerned in it, will be very different; the series and sum total of their incomes being the same, it makes a wide difference at which end they begin.

IV. Happiness consists in health.

By health I understand, as well freedom from bodily distempers, as that tranquillity, firmness, and alacrity of mind, which we call good spirits; and which may properly enough be included in our notion of health, as depending commonly upon the same causes, and yielding to the same management, as our bodily constitution.

Health, in this sense, is the one thing needful. Therefore no pains, expense, self-denial, or restraint, to which we subject ourselves for the sake of health, is too much. Whether it require us to relinquish lucrative situations, to abstain from favourite indulgences, to control intemperate passions, or undergo tedious regimens; whatever difficulties it lays us under, a man, who pursues his happiness rationally and resolutely, will be content to submit.

When we are in perfect health and spirits, we feel in ourselves a happiness independent of any particular outward gratification whatever, and of which we can give no account. This is an enjoyment which the Deity has annexed to life; and it probably constitutes, in a great measure, the happiness of infants and brutes, especially of the lower and sedentary orders of animals, as of oysters, periwinkles, and the like; for which I have sometimes been at a loss to find out amusement.

The above account of human happiness will justify the two following conclusions, which, although found in most books of morality, have seldom, I think, been supported by any sufficient reasons:—

First, That happiness is pretty equally distributed amongst the different orders of civil society:

Secondly, That vice has no advantage over virtue, even with respect to this world's happiness.

CHAPTER VII.

Virtue.

Virtue is "*the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness.*"

According to which definition, "the good of mankind" is the subject; the "will of God," the rule; and "everlasting happiness," the motive, of human virtue.

Virtue has been divided by some moralists into *benevolence, prudence, fortitude,* and *temperance.* *Benevolence* proposes good ends; *prudence* suggests the best means of attaining them; *fortitude* enables us to encounter the difficulties, dangers, and discouragements, which stand in our way in the pursuit of these ends; *temperance* repels and overcomes the passions that obstruct it. *Benevolence,* for instance, prompts us to undertake the cause of an oppressed orphan; *prudence* suggests the best means of going about it; *fortitude* enables us to confront the danger, and bear up against the loss, disgrace, or repulse, that may attend our undertaking; and *temperance* keeps under the love of money, of ease, or amusement, which might divert us from it.

Virtue is distinguished by others into two branches only, *prudence* and *benevolence: prudence,* attention to our own interest; *benevolence,* to that of our fellow-creatures: both directed to the same end, the increase of happiness in nature; and taking equal concern in the future as in the present.

The four cardinal virtues are, *prudence, fortitude, temperance* and *justice.*

But the division of virtue, to which we are in modern times most accustomed, is into duties;—

Towards *God;* as piety, reverence, resignation, gratitude, &c.

Towards *other men* (or relative duties;) as justice, charity, fidelity, loyalty, &c.

Towards *ourselves;* as chastity, sobriety, temperance, preservation of life, care of health, &c.

More of these distinctions have been proposed, which it is not worth while to set down.

I shall proceed to state a few observations, which relate to the general regulation of human conduct; unconnected indeed with each other, but very worthy of attention; and which fall as properly under the title of this chapter as of any future one.

1. Mankind act more from habit than reflection.

It is on few only and great occasions that men deliberate at all; on fewer still, that they institute any thing like a regular inquiry into the moral rectitude or depravity of what they are about to do; or wait for the result of it. We are for the most part determined at once; and by an impulse, which is the effect and energy of pre-established habit. And this constitution seems well adapted to the exigences of human life, and to the imbecility of our moral principle. In the current occasions and rapid opportunities of life, there is oftentimes little leisure for reflection; and were there more, a man, who has to reason about his duty, when the temptation to transgress it is upon him, is almost sure to reason himself into an error.

If we are in so great a degree passive under our habits; Where, it is asked, is the exercise of virtue, the guilt of vice, or any use of moral and religious knowledge? I answer, in the *forming and contracting* of these habits.

And hence results a rule of life of considerable importance, viz. that many things are to be done and abstained from, solely for the sake of habit. We will explain ourselves by an example or two: —A beggar, with the appearance of extreme distress, asks our charity. If we come to argue the matter, whether the distress be real, whether it be

not brought upon himself, whether it be of public advantage to admit such application, whether it be not to encourage idleness and vagrancy, whether it may not invite impostors to our doors, whether the money can be well spared, or might not be better applied; when these considerations are put together, it may appear very doubtful, whether we ought or ought not to give any thing. But when we reflect, that the misery before our eyes excites our pity, whether we will or not; that it is of the utmost consequence to us to cultivate this tenderness of mind; that it is a quality, cherished by indulgence, and soon stifled by opposition; when this, I say, is considered, a wise man will do that for his own sake, which he would have hesitated to do for the petitioner's; he will give way to his compassion, rather than offer violence to a habit of so much general use.

A man of confirmed good habits, will act in the same manner without any consideration at all.

This may serve for one instance; another is the following:—A man has been brought up from his infancy with a dread of lying. An occasion presents itself where, at the expense of a little veracity, he may divert his company, set off his own wit with advantage, attract the notice and engage the partiality of all about him. This is not a small temptation. And when he looks at the other side of the question, he sees no mischief that can ensue from this liberty, no slander of any man's reputation, no prejudice likely to arise to any man's interest. Were there nothing further to be considered, it would be difficult to show why a man under such circumstances might not indulge his humour. But when he reflects that his scruples about lying have hitherto preserved him free from this vice; that occasions like the present will return, where the inducement may be equally strong, but the indulgence much less innocent; that his scruples will wear away by a few transgressions, and leave him subject to one of the meanest and most pernicious of all bad habits,—a habit of lying, whenever it will serve his turn: when all this, I say, is considered, a wise man will forego the present, or a much greater pleasure, rather than lay the foundation of a character so vicious and contemptible.

From what has been said, may be explained also the nature of *habitual* virtue. By the definition of virtue, placed at the beginning of this chapter, it appears, that the good of mankind is the subject, the will of God the rule, and everlasting happiness the motive and end, of all virtue. Yet, in fact, a man shall perform many an act of virtue without having either the good of mankind, the will of God, or everlasting happiness in his thought. How is this to be understood? In the same manner as that a man may be a very good servant, without being conscious, at every turn, of a particular regard to his master's will, or of an express attention to his master's interest: indeed, your best old servants are of this sort: but then he must have served for a length of time under the actual direction of these motives, to bring it to this: in which service, his merit and virtue consist.

There are *habits*, not only of drinking, swearing, and lying, and of some other things, which are commonly acknowledged to be habits, and called so: but of every modification of action, speech, and thought. Man is a bundle of habits.

There are habits of industry, attention, vigilance, advertency; of a prompt obedience to the judgment occurring, or of yielding to the first impulse of passion; of extending our views to the future, or of resting upon the present; of apprehending, methodising, reasoning; of indolence and dilatoriness; of vanity, self-conceit, melancholy, partiality; of fretfulness, suspicion, captiousness; censoriousness; of pride, ambition, covetousness; of overreaching, intriguing, projecting; in a word, there is not a quality or function, either of body or mind, which does not feel the influence of this great law of animated nature.

II. The Christian religion hath not ascertained the precise quantity of virtue necessary to salvation.

This has been made an objection to Christianity; but without reason. For as all revelation, however imparted originally, must be transmitted by the ordinary vehicle of language, it behoves those who make the objection, to show that any form of words could be devised, that might express this *quantity;* or that it is possible to constitute a standard of moral attainments, accommodated to the almost infinite diversity which subsists in the capacities and opportunities of different men.

It seems most agreeable to our conceptions of justice, and is consonant enough to the language of scripture,* to suppose, that there are prepared for us rewards and punishments, of all possible degrees, from the most exalted happiness down to extreme misery; so that "our labour is never in vain;" whatever advancement we make in virtue, we procure a proportionable accession of future happiness; as, on the other hand, every accumulation of vice is the "treasuring up so much wrath against the day of wrath." It has been said, that it can never be a just economy of Providence, to admit one part of mankind into heaven, and condemn the other to hell; since there must be very little to choose, between the worst man who is received into heaven, and the best who is excluded. And how know we, it might be answered, but that there may be as little to choose in the conditions?

Without entering into a detail of Scripture morality, which would anticipate our subject, the following general positions may be advanced, I think, with safety.

1. That a state of happiness is not to be expected by those who are conscious of no moral or religious rule: I mean those who cannot with truth say, that they have been prompted to one action, or withholden from one gratification, by any regard to virtue or religion, either immediate or habitual.

There needs no other proof of this, than the consideration, that a brute would be as proper an object of reward as such a man, and that, if the case were so, the penal sanctions of religion could

* "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully;" 2 Cor. ix. 6.—"And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, shall be beaten with few stripes." Luke xii. 47, 48.—"Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ; verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward;" to wit, intimating that there is in reserve a proportionable reward for even the smallest act of virtue. Mark ix. 41.—See also the parable of the pounds, Luke xix. 16, &c.; where he whose pound had gained ten pounds, was placed over ten cities; and he whose pound had gained five pounds, was placed over five cities.

have no place. For, whom would you punish, if you make such a one as this happy?—or rather indeed, religion itself, both natural and revealed, would cease to have either use or authority.

2. That a state of happiness is not to be expected by those, who reserve to themselves the habitual practice of any one sin, or neglect of one known duty.

Because, no obedience can proceed upon proper motives, which is not universal, that is, which is not directed to every command of God alike, as they all stand upon the same authority.

Because such an allowance would, in effect, amount to a toleration of every vice in the world.

And because the strain of Scripture language excludes any such hope. When our *duties* are recited, they are put *collectively*, that is, as all and every one of them required in the Christian character. "*Add* to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."* On the other hand, when *vices* are enumerated, they are put *disjunctively*, that is, as separately and severally excluding the sinner from heaven. "*Neither* fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven."†

Those texts of Scripture, which seem to lean a contrary way, as that "charity shall cover the multitude of sins;"‡ that "he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall hide a multitude of sins;"§ cannot, I think, for the reasons above mentioned, be extended to sins deliberately, habitually, and obstinately persisted in.

3. That a state of mere unprofitableness will not go unpunished.

This is expressly laid down by Christ, in the parable of the talents, which supersedes all further reasoning upon the subject. "Then he which had received one talent, came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an austere man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid, and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and *slothful* servant, thou knewest, (or, knewest thou?) that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents; for unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath: *and cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*"‖

III. In every question of conduct, where one side is doubtful, and the other safe; we are bound to take the safe side.

This is best explained by an instance; and I know of none more to our purpose than that of suicide. Suppose, for example's sake, that it appeared doubtful to a reasoner upon the subject, whether he may lawfully destroy himself. He can have no doubt, that it is lawful for him to let it alone. Here therefore is a case, in which one side is doubtful, and the other side safe. By virtue therefore of our rule, he is bound to pursue the safe side, that is, to forbear from offering violence to himself, whilst a doubt remains upon his mind concerning the lawfulness of suicide.

It is *prudent*, you allow, to take the safe side. But our observation means something more. We assert that the action concerning which we doubt, whatever it may be in itself, or to another, would, in *us*, whilst this doubt remains upon our minds, be certainly sinful. The case is expressly so adjudged by St. Paul, with whose authority we will for the present rest contented. "I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but *to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*— Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth; and he that doubteth, is damned (*condemned*) if he eat; for whatsoever is not of faith (*i. e.* not done with a full persuasion of the lawfulness of it) is sin."*

* 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. † 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.
‡ 1 Pet. iv. 8. § James v. 20.
‖ Matt. xxv. 24, &c.

* Rom. xiv. 14, 22, 23.

BOOK II.

MORAL OBLIGATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

The question 'Why am I obliged to keep my word?' considered.

WHY am I obliged to keep my word?

Because it is right, says one.—Because it is agreeable to the fitness of things, says another.—Because it is conformable to reason and nature, says a third.—Because it is conformable to truth, says a fourth.—Because it promotes the public good, says a fifth.—Because it is required by the will of God, concludes a sixth.

Upon which different accounts, two things are observable:—

FIRST, that they all ultimately coincide.

The fitness of things, means their fitness to produce happiness: the nature of things, means that actual constitution of the world, by which some things, as such and such actions, for example, produce happiness, and others misery; reason is the principle by which we discover or judge of this constitution: truth is this judgment, expressed or drawn out into propositions. So that it necessarily comes to pass, that what promotes the public happiness, or happiness on the whole, is agreeable to the fitness of things, to nature, to reason, and to truth; and such (as will appear by and bye,) is the Divine character, that what promotes the general happiness, is required by the will of God; and what has all the above properties, must needs be *right*; for, right means no more than conformity to the rule we go by, whatever that rule be.

And this is the reason that moralists, from whatever different principles they set out, com-

monly meet in their conclusions; that is, they enjoin the same conduct, prescribe the same rules of duty, and, with a few exceptions, deliver upon dubious cases the same determinations.

SECONDLY, it is to be observed, that these answers all leave the matter *short;* for the inquirer may turn round upon his teacher with a second question, in which he will expect to be satisfied, namely, *Why* am I obliged to do what is right; to act agreeably to the fitness of things; to conform to reason, nature, or truth; to promote the public good, or to obey the will of God.

The proper method of conducting the inquiry is, FIRST, to examine what we mean, when we say a man is *obliged* to do any thing; and THEN to show *why* he is obliged to do the thing which we have proposed as an example, namely, "to keep his word."

CHAPTER II.

What we mean to say when a man is obliged *to do a thing.*

A MAN is said to be *obliged*, "*when he is urged by a violent motive resulting from the command of another.*"

FIRST, "The motive must be violent." If a person, who has done me so little service, or has a small place in his disposal, ask me upon some occasion for my vote, I may possibly give it him, from a motive of gratitude or expectation: but I should hardly say that I was *obliged* to give it him; because the inducement does not rise high enough. Whereas, if a father or a master, any great benefactor, or one on whom my fortune depends, require my vote, I give it him of course: and my answer to all who asked me why I voted so and so, is, that my father or my master *obliged* me; that I had received so many favours from, or had so great a dependence upon, such a one, that I was *obliged* to vote as he directed me.

SECONDLY, "It must result from the command of another." Offer a man a gratuity for doing any thing, for seizing, for example, an offender, he is not *obliged* by your offer to do it; nor would he say he is; though he may be *induced, persuaded, prevailed upon, tempted.* If a magistrate or the man's immediate superior command it, he considers himself as *obliged* to comply, though possibly he would lose less by a refusal in this case, than in the former.

I will not undertake to say that the words *obligation* and *obliged* are used uniformly in this sense, or always with this distinction: nor is it possible to tie down popular phrases to any constant signification: but wherever the motive is violent enough, and coupled with the idea of command, authority, law, or the will of a superior, there, I take it, we always reckon ourselves to be *obliged.*

And from this account of obligation, it follows, that we can be obliged to nothing, but what we ourselves are to gain or lose something by; for nothing else can be a "violent motive" to us.—As we should not be obliged to obey the laws, or the magistrate, unless rewards or punishments, pleasure, or pain, somehow or other, depended upon our obedience; so neither should we, without the same reason, be obliged to do what is right, to practise virtue, or to obey the commands of God.

CHAPTER III.

The question, 'Why am I obliged to keep my word?' resumed.

LET it be remembered, that to be *obliged*, is "to be urged by a violent motive, resulting from the command of another."

And then let it be asked, Why am I *obliged* to keep my word? and the answer will be, Because I am "urged to do so by a violent motive" (namely, the expectation of being after this life rewarded, if I do, or punished for it, if I do not,) "resulting from the command of another" (namely of God.)

This solution goes to the bottom of the subject, as no further question can reasonably be asked.

Therefore, private happiness is our motive, and the will of God our rule.

When I first turned my thoughts to moral speculations, an air of mystery seemed to hang over the whole subject; which arose, I believe, from hence,—that I supposed, with many authors whom I had read, that to be *obliged* to do a thing, was very different from being *induced* only to do it; and that the obligation to practise virtue, to do what is right, just, &c. was quite another thing, and of another kind, than the obligation which a soldier is under to obey his officer, a servant his master; or any of the civil and ordinary obligations of human life. Whereas, from what has been said, it appears that moral obligation is like all other obligations; and that *obligation* is nothing more than an *inducement* of sufficient strength, and resulting, in some way, from the command of another.

There is always understood to be a difference between an act of *prudence* and an act of *duty.* Thus, if I distrust a man who owed me a sum of money, I should reckon it an act of prudence to get another person bound with him; but I should hardly call it an act of duty. On the other hand, it would be thought a very unusual and loose kind of language, to say, that as I had made such a promise, it was *prudent* to perform it; or that, as my friend, when he went abroad, placed a box of jewels in my hands, it would be *prudent* in me to preserve it for him till he returned.

Now, in what, you will ask, does the difference consist? inasmuch, as, according to our account of the matter, both in the one case and the other, in acts of duty as well as acts of prudence, we consider solely what we ourselves shall gain or lose by the act.

The difference, and the only difference, is this; that in the one case, we consider what we shall gain or lose in the present world; in the other case, we consider also what we shall gain or lose in the world to come.

They who would establish a system of morality, independent of a future state, must look out for some different idea of moral obligation; unless they can show that virtue conducts the possessor to certain happiness in this life, or to a much greater share of it than he could attain by a different behaviour.

To us there are two great questions:

I. Will there be after this life any distribution of rewards and punishments at all?

II. If there be, what actions will be rewarded, and what will be punished?

The first question comprises the credibility of the Christian Religion, together with the presumptive proofs of a future retribution from the light of

nature. The second question comprises the province of morality. Both questions are too much for one work. The affirmative therefore of the first, although we confess that it is the foundation upon which the whole fabric rests, must in this treatise be taken for granted.

CHAPTER IV.

The will of God.

As the will of God is our rule; to inquire what is our duty, or what we are obliged to do, in any instance, is, in effect, to inquire what is the will of God in that instance? which consequently becomes the whole business of morality.

Now there are two methods of coming at the will of God on any point:

I. By his express declarations, when they are to be had, and which must be sought for in Scripture.

II. By what we can discover of his designs and disposition from his works; or, as we usually call it, the light of nature.

And here we may observe the absurdity of separating natural and revealed religion from each other. The object of both is the same,—to discover the will of God,—and, provided we do but discover it, it matters nothing by what means.

An ambassador, judging by what he knows of his sovereign's disposition, and arguing from what he has observed of his conduct, or is acquainted with of his designs, may take his measures in many cases with safety, and presume with great probability how his master would have him act on most occasions that arise: but if he have his commission and instructions in his pocket, it would be strange not to look into them. He will be directed by both rules: when his instructions are clear and positive, there is an end to all further deliberation (unless indeed he suspect their authenticity:) where his instructions are silent or dubious, he will endeavour to supply or explain them by what he has been able to collect from other quarters of his master's general inclination or intentions.

Mr. Hume, in his fourth Appendix to his Principles of Morals, has been pleased to complain of the modern scheme of uniting Ethics with the Christian Theology. They who find themselves disposed to join in this complaint, will do well to observe what Mr. Hume himself has been able to make of morality without this union. And for that purpose, let them read the second part of the ninth section of the above Essay; which part contains the practical application of the whole treatise,—a treatise which Mr. Hume declares to be "incomparably the best he ever wrote." When they have read it over, let them consider, whether any motives there proposed are likely to be found sufficient to withhold men from the gratification of lust, revenge, envy, ambition, avarice; or to prevent the existence of these passions. Unless they rise up from this celebrated essay with stronger impressions upon their minds than it ever left upon mine, they will acknowledge the necessity of additional sanctions. But the necessity of these sanctions is not now the question. If they be *in fact established*, if the rewards and punishments held forth in the Gospel will actually come to pass, they *must* be considered. Such as reject the Christian Religion, are to make the best shift they can to build up a system, and lay the foundation of morality without it. But it appears to me a great inconsistency in those who receive Christianity, and expect something to come of it, to endeavour to keep all such expectations out of sight in their reasonings concerning human duty.

The method of coming at the will of God, concerning any action, by the light of nature, is to inquire into "the tendency of the action to promote or diminish the general happiness." This rule proceeds upon the presumption, that God Almighty wills and wishes the happiness of his creatures; and, consequently, that those actions, which promote that will and wish, must be agreeable to him; and the contrary.

As this presumption is the foundation of our whole system, it becomes necessary to explain the reasons upon which it rests.

CHAPTER V.

The Divine Benevolence.

When God created the human species, either he wished their happiness, or he wished their misery, or he was indifferent and unconcerned about both.

If he had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses to be so many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment: or by placing us amidst objects so ill-suited to our perceptions, as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for example, every thing we tasted, bitter; every thing we saw, loathsome; every thing we touched, a sting; every smell a stench; and every sound a discord.

If he had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune (as all design by this supposition is excluded) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to produce it. But either of these (and still more both of them) being too much to be attributed to accident, nothing remains but the first supposition, that God, when he created the human species, wished their happiness; and made for them the provision which he has made, with that view, and for that purpose.

The same argument may be proposed in different terms, thus: Contrivance proves design: and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances; and all the contrivances which we are acquainted with, are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil, no doubt, exists; but is never, that we can perceive, the object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then, is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it; or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance; but it is not the *object* of it. This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you would hardly say of the sickle, that it is made to cut the reaper's fingers, though, from the construction of the instrument, and the

manner of using it, this mischief often happens. But if you had occasion to describe instruments of torture or execution, This engine, you would say, is to extend the sinews; this to dislocate the joints; this to break the bones; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Here, pain and misery are the very *objects* of the contrivance. Now, nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of nature. We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said; This is to irritate, this to inflame; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys; this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout: if by chance he come at a part of which he knows not the use, the most that he can say is, that it is useless: no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment. Since then God hath called forth his consummate wisdom to contrive and provide for our happiness, and the world appears to have been constituted with this design at first; so long as this constitution is upholden by him, we must in reason suppose the same design to continue.

The contemplation of universal nature rather bewilders the mind than affects it. There is always a bright spot in the prospect, upon which the eye rests; a single example, perhaps, by which each man finds himself more *convinced* than by all others put together. I seem, for my own part, to see the benevolence of the Deity more clearly in the pleasures of very young children, than in any thing in the world. The pleasures of grown persons may be reckoned partly of their own procuring; especially if there has been any industry, or contrivance, or pursuit, to come at them; or if they are founded, like music, painting, &c. upon any qualification of their own acquiring. But the pleasures of a healthy infant are so manifestly provided for it by *another*, and the benevolence of the provision is so unquestionable, that every child I see at its sport, affords to my mind a kind of sensible evidence of the finger of God, and of the disposition which directs it.

But the example, which strikes each man most strongly, is the true example for him: and hardly two minds hit upon the same; which shows the abundance of such examples about us.

We conclude, therefore, that God wills and wishes the happiness of his creatures. And this conclusion being once established, we are at liberty to go on with the rule built upon it, namely, "that the method of coming at the will of God, concerning any action, by the light of nature, is to inquire into the tendency of that action to promote or diminish the general happiness."

CHAPTER VI.

Utility.

So then actions are to be estimated by their tendency*. Whatever is expedient, is right. It is the utility of any moral rule alone, which constitutes the obligation of it.

But to all this there seems a plain objection, viz. that many actions are useful, which no man in his senses will allow to be right. There are occasions, in which the hand of the assassin would be very useful. The present possessor of some great estate employs his influence and fortune, to annoy, corrupt, or oppress, all about him. His estate would devolve, by his death, to a successor of an opposite character. It is useful, therefore, to despatch such a one as soon as possible out of the way; as the neighbourhood will exchange thereby a pernicious tyrant for a wise and generous benefactor. It might be useful to rob a miser, and give the money to the poor; as the money, no doubt, would produce more happiness, by being laid out in food and clothing for half a dozen distressed families, than by continuing locked up in a miser's chest. It may be useful to get possession of a place, a piece of preferment, or of a seat in parliament, by bribery or false swearing: as by means of them we may serve the public more effectually than in our private station. What then shall we say? Must we admit these actions to be right, which would be to justify assassination, plunder, and perjury; or must we give up our principle, that the criterion of right is utility.

It is not necessary to do either.

The true answer is this; that these actions, after all, are not useful, and for that reason, and that alone, are not right.

To see this point perfectly, it must be observed, that the bad consequences of actions, are twofold, *particular* and *general*.

The particular bad consequence of an action, is the mischief which that single action directly and immediately occasions.

The general bad consequence is, the violation of some necessary or useful *general* rule.

Thus, the particular bad consequences of the assassination above described, is the fright and pain which the deceased underwent; the loss he suffered of life, which is as valuable to a bad man, as to a good one, or more so; the prejudice and affliction, of which his death was the occasion to his family, friends, and dependants.

The general bad consequence is the violation of this necessary general rule, that no man be put to death for his crimes but by public authority.

Although, therefore, such an action have no particular bad consequences, or greater particular good consequences, yet it is not useful, by reason of the general consequence, which is of more importance, and which is evil. And the same of the other two instances, and of a million more which might be mentioned.

But as this solution supposes, that the moral government of the world must proceed by general rules, it remains that we show the necessity of this.

CHAPTER VII.

The necessity of general rules.

You cannot permit one action and forbid another, without showing a difference between them.—Consequently, the same sort of actions must be

* Actions in the abstract are right or wrong, according to their *tendency*; the agent is virtuous or vicious, according to his *design*. Thus, if the question be, Whether relieving common beggars be right or wrong? we inquire into the *tendency* of such a conduct to the public advantage or inconvenience. If the question be, Whether a man remarkable for this sort of bounty is to be esteemed virtuous for that reason? we inquire into his *design*, whether his liberality sprang from charity or from ostentation? It is evident that our concern is with actions in the abstract.

generally permitted or generally forbidden.—Where, therefore, the general permission of them would be pernicious, it becomes necessary to lay down and support the rule which generally forbids them.

Thus to return once more to the case of the assassin. The assassin knocked the rich villain on the head, because he thought him better out of the way than in it. If you allow this excuse in the present instance, you must allow it to all who act in the same manner, and from the said motive; that is, you must allow every man to kill any one he meets, whom he thinks noxious or useless; which, in the event, would be to commit every man's life and safety to the spleen, fury, and fanaticism, of his neighbour;—a disposition of affairs which would soon fill the world with misery and confusion; and ere long put an end to human society, if not to the human species.

The necessity of general rules in human government is apparent; but whether the same necessity subsists in the Divine economy, in that distribution of rewards and punishments to which a moralist looks forward, may be doubted.

I answer, that general rules are necessary to every moral government: and by moral government I mean any dispensation, whose object is to influence the conduct of reasonable creatures.

For if, of two actions perfectly similar, one be punished, and the other be rewarded or forgiven, which is the consequence of rejecting general rules, the subjects of such a dispensation would no longer know, either what to expect or how to act. Rewards and punishments would cease to be such,—would become accidents. Like the stroke of a thunderbolt, or the discovery of a mine, like a blank or a benefit-ticket in a lottery, they would occasion pain or pleasure when they happened; but, following in no known order, from any particular course of action, they could have no previous influence or effect upon the conduct.

An attention to general rules, therefore, is included in the very idea of reward and punishment. Consequently, whatever reason there is to expect future reward and punishment at the hand of God, there is the same reason to believe, that he will proceed in the distribution of it by general rules.

Before we prosecute the consideration of general consequences any further, it may be proper to anticipate a reflection, which will be apt enough to suggest itself, in the progress of our argument.

As the general consequence of an action, upon which so much of the guilt of a bad action depends, consists in the *example*; it should seem, that if the action be done with perfect secrecy, so as to furnish no bad example, that part of the guilt drops off. In the case of suicide, for instance, if a man can so manage matters, as to take away his own life, without being known or suspected to have done so, he is not chargeable with any mischief from the example; nor does his punishment seem necessary, in order to save the authority of any general rule.

In the first place, those who reason in this manner do not observe, that they are setting up a general rule, of all others the least to be endured; namely, that secrecy, whenever secrecy is practicable, will justify any action.

Were such a rule admitted, for instance, in the case above produced; is there not reason to fear that people would be *disappearing* perpetually?

In the next place, I would wish them to be well satisfied about the points proposed in the following queries;—

1. Whether the Scriptures do not teach us to expect that, at the general judgment of the world, the most secret actions will be brought to light?*

2. For what purpose can this be, but to make them the objects of reward and punishment.

3. Whether, being so brought to light, they will not fall under the operation of those equal and impartial rules, by which God will deal with his creatures?

They will then become examples, whatever they be now; and require the same treatment from the judge and governor of the moral world, as if they had been detected from the first.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Consideration of General Consequences pursued.

The general consequence of any action may be estimated, by asking what would be the consequence, if the same sort of actions were generally permitted.—But suppose they were, and a thousand such actions perpetrated under this permission; is it just to charge a single action with the collected guilt and mischief of the whole thousand? I answer, that the reason for prohibiting and punishing an action (and this reason may be called the guilt of the action, if you please) will always be in proportion to the whole mischief that would arise from the general impunity and toleration of actions of the same sort.

"Whatever is expedient is right." But then it must be expedient on the whole, at the long run, in all its effects collateral and remote, as well as in those which are immediate and direct; as it is obvious, that, in computing consequences, it makes no difference in what way or at what distance they ensue.

To impress this doctrine on the minds of young readers, and to teach them to extend their views beyond the immediate mischief of a crime, I shall here subjoin a string of instances, in which the particular consequence is comparatively insignificant; and where the malignity of the crime, and the severity with which human laws pursue it, is almost entirely founded upon the general consequence.

The particular consequence of coining is, the loss of a guinea, or of half a guinea, to the person who receives the counterfeit money: the general consequence (by which I mean the consequence that would ensue, if the same practice were generally permitted) is to abolish the use of money.

The particular consequence of forgery is, a damage of twenty or thirty pounds to the man

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* "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Rom. xi. 16.—"Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart." 1 Cor. iv. 5.

who accepts the forged bill: the general consequence is, the stoppage of paper-currency.

The particular consequence of sheep-stealing, or horse-stealing, is a loss to the owner, to the amount of the value of the sheep or horse stolen: the general consequence is, that the land could not be occupied, nor the market supplied, with this kind of stock.

The particular consequence of breaking into a house empty of inhabitants, is, the loss of a pair of silver candlesticks, or a few spoons: the general consequence is, that nobody could leave the house empty.

The particular consequence of smuggling may be a deduction from the national fund too minute for computation: the general consequence is, the destruction of one entire branch of public revenue; a proportionable increase of the burthen upon other branches; and the ruin of all fair and open trade in the article smuggled.

The particular consequence of an officer's breaking his parole is, the loss of a prisoner, who was possibly not worth keeping: the general consequence is, that this mitigation of captivity would be refused to all others.

And what proves incontestably the superior importance of general consequence is, that crimes are the same, and treated in the same manner, though the particular consequence be very different. The crime and fate of the house-breaker is the same, whether his booty be five pounds or fifty. And the reason is, that the general consequence is the same.

The want of this distinction between particular and general consequences, or rather, the not sufficiently attending to the latter, is the cause of that perplexity which we meet with in ancient moralists. On the one hand, they were sensible of the absurdity of pronouncing actions good or evil, without regard to the good or evil they produced. On the other hand, they were startled at the conclusions to which a steady adherence to consequences seemed sometimes to conduct them. To relieve this difficulty, they contrived the το πρεπον or the *honestum*, by which terms they meant to constitute a measure of right, distinct from utility. Whilst the *utile* served them, that is, whilst it corresponded with their habitual notions of the rectitude of actions, they went by *it*. When they fell in with such cases as those mentioned in the sixth chapter, they took leave of their guide, and resorted to the *honestum*. The only account they could give of the matter was, that these actions might be useful; but, because they were not at the same time *honesta*, they were by no means to be deemed just or right.

From the principles delivered in this and the two preceding chapters, a maxim may be explained, which is in every man's mouth, and in most men's without meaning, viz. "not to do evil, that good may come:" that is, let us not violate a general rule, for the sake of any particular good consequence we may expect. Which is for the most part a salutary caution, the advantage seldom compensating for the violation of the rule. Strictly speaking, that cannot be "evil," from which "good comes;" but in this way, and with a view to the distinction between particular and general consequences, it may.

We will conclude this subject of *consequences* with the following reflection. A man may imagine, that any action of his, with respect to the public, must be inconsiderable; so also is the agent. If his crime produce but a small effect upon the *universal* interest, his punishment or destruction bears a small proportion to the sum of happiness and misery in the creation.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Right.

RIGHT and obligation are reciprocal; that is, wherever there is a right in one person, there is a corresponding obligation upon others. If one man has "a right" to an estate, others are "obliged" to abstain from it:—If parents have a "right" to reverence from their children, children are "obliged" to reverence their parents:—and so in all other instances.

Now, because moral *obligation* depends, as we have seen, upon the will of God; *right*, which is correlative to it, must depend upon the same.—Right, therefore, signifies, *consistency with the will of God*.

But if the Divine will determine the distinction of right and wrong, what else is it but an identical proposition, to say of God, that he acts *right?* or how is it possible to conceive even that he should act *wrong?* Yet these assertions are intelligible and significant. The case is this: By virtue of the two principles, that God wills the happiness of his creatures, and that the will of God is the measure of right and wrong, we arrive at certain conclusions; which conclusions become rules; and we soon learn to pronounce actions right or wrong, according as they agree or disagree with our rules, without looking any further: and when the habit is once established of stopping at the rules, we can go back and compare with these rules even the Divine conduct itself; and yet it may be true (only not observed by us at the time) that the rules themselves are deduced from the Divine will.

Right is a quality of persons or of actions.

Of persons; as when we say, such a one has a "right" to this estate; parents have a "right" to reverence from their children; the king to allegiance from his subjects; masters have "right" to their servants' labour; a man has not a "right" over his own life.

Of actions; as in such expressions as the following: it is "right" to punish murder with death; his behaviour on that occasion was "right;" it is not "right" to send an unfortunate debtor to jail; he did or acted "right," who gave up his place, rather than vote against his judgment.

In this latter set of expressions, you may substitute the definition of right above given, for the term itself: *e. g.* it is "consistent with the will of God to punish murder with death; his behaviour on that occasion was "consistent with the will of God;"—it is not "consistent with the will of God" to send an unfortunate debtor to jail;—he did, or acted, "consistently with the will of God," who gave up his place, rather than vote against his judgment.

In the former set, you must vary the construction a little, when you introduce the definition instead of the term. Such a one has a "right" to this estate, that is, it is "consistent with the will of God" that such a one should have it;—parents have a "right" to reverence from their children,

that is, it is "consistent with the will of God" that children should reverence their parents;—and the same of the rest.

CHAPTER X.

The Division of Rights.

Rights, when applied to persons, are
Natural or adventitious:
Alienable or unalienable:
Perfect or imperfect.

I. Rights are natural or adventitious.

Natural rights are such as would belong to a man, although there subsisted in the world no civil government whatever.

Adventitious rights are such as would not.

Natural rights are, a man's right to his life, limbs, and liberty; his right to the produce of his personal labour; to the use, in common with others, of air, light, water. If a thousand different persons, from a thousand different corners of the world, were cast together upon a desert island, they would from the first be every one entitled to these rights.

Adventitious rights are, the right of a king over his subjects; of a general over his soldiers; of a judge over the life and liberty of a prisoner; a right to elect or appoint magistrates, to impose taxes, decide disputes, direct the descent or disposition of property; a right, in a word, in any one man, or particular body of men, to make laws and regulations for the rest. For none of these rights would exist in the newly inhabited island.

And here it will be asked, how adventitious rights are created; or, which is the same thing, how any new rights can accrue from the establishment of civil society; as rights of all kinds, we remember, depend upon the will of God, and civil society is but the ordinance and institution of man? For the solution of this difficulty, we must return to our first principles. God wills the happiness of mankind; and the existence of civil society, as conducive to that happiness. Consequently, many things, which are useful for the support of civil society in general, or for the conduct and conversation of particular societies already established, are, for that reason, "consistent with the will of God," or "right," which, without that reason, *i. e.* without the establishment of civil society, would not have been so.

From whence also it appears, that adventitious rights, though immediately derived from human appointment, are not, for that reason, less sacred than natural rights, nor the obligation to respect them less cogent. They both ultimately rely upon the same authority, the will of God. Such a man claims a right to a particular estate. He can show, it is true, nothing for his right, but a rule of the civil community to which he belongs; and this rule may be arbitrary, capricious, and absurd. Notwithstanding all this, there would be the same sin in dispossessing the man of his estate by craft or violence, as if it had been assigned to him, like the partition of the country amongst the twelve tribes, by the immediate designation and appointment of Heaven.

II. Rights are alienable or unalienable.

Which terms explain themselves.

The right we have to most of those things which we call property, as houses, lands, money, &c. is alienable.

The right of a prince over his people, of a husband over his wife, of a master over his servant, is generally and naturally unalienable.

The distinction depends upon the mode of acquiring the right. If the right originate from a contract, and be limited to the *person*, by the express terms of the contract, or by the common interpretation of such contracts (which is equivalent to an express stipulation,) or by a *personal condition* annexed to the right; then it is unalienable. In all other cases it is alienable.

The right to civil liberty is alienable; though in the vehemence of men's zeal for it, and the language of some political remonstrances, it has often been pronounced to be an unalienable right. The true reason why mankind hold in detestation the memory of those who have sold their liberty to a tyrant, is, that, together with their own, they sold commonly, or endangered, the liberty of others; which certainly they had no right to dispose of.

III. Rights are perfect or imperfect.

Perfect rights may be asserted by force, or, what in civil society comes into the place of private force, by course of law.

Imperfect rights may not.

Examples of perfect rights.—A man's right to his life, person, house; for, if these be attacked, he may repel the attack by instant violence, or punish the aggressor by law: a man's right to his estate, furniture, clothes, money, and to all ordinary articles of property; for, if they be injuriously taken from him, he may compel the author of the injury to make restitution or satisfaction.

Examples of imperfect rights.—In elections or appointments to offices, where the qualifications are prescribed, the best qualified candidate has a right to success; yet, if he be rejected, he has no remedy. He can neither seize the office by force, nor obtain redress at law; his right therefore is imperfect. A poor neighbour has a right to relief; yet, if it be refused him, he must not extort it. A benefactor has a right to returns of gratitude from the person he has obliged; yet, if he meet with none, he must acquiesce. Children have a right to affection and education from their parents; and parents, on their part, to duty and reverence from their children; yet, if these rights be on either side withholden, there is no compulsion by which they can be enforced.

It may be at first view difficult to apprehend how a person should have a right to a thing, and yet have no right to use the means necessary to obtain it. This difficulty, like most others in morality, is resolvable into the necessity of general rules. The reader recollects, that a person is said to have a "right" to a thing, when it is "consistent with the will of God" that he should possess it. So that the question is reduced to this: How it comes to pass that it should be consistent with the will of God that a person should possess a thing, and yet not be consistent with the same will that he should use force to obtain it? The answer is, that by reason of the indeterminateness either of the object, or of the circumstances of the right, the permission of force in this case would, in its consequence, lead to the permission of force in other cases, where there existed no right at all. The candidate above described has, no doubt, a right to success; but his right depends upon his qualifications, for instance, upon his comparative virtue, learning, &c. there must be some body therefore to compare them. The existence, degree, and respective im-

portance, of these qualifications, are all indeterminate: there must be somebody therefore to determine them. To allow the candidate to demand success by force, is to make him the judge of his own qualifications. You cannot do this, but you must make all other candidates the same; which would open a door to demands without number, reason, or right. In like manner, a poor man has a right to relief from the rich; but the mode, season, and quantum of that relief, who shall contribute to it, or how much, are not ascertained. Yet these points must be ascertained, before a claim to relief can be prosecuted by force. For, to allow the poor to ascertain them for themselves, would be to expose property to so many of these claims, that it would lose its value, or rather its nature, that is, cease indeed to be property. The same observation holds of all other cases of imperfect rights; not to mention, that in the instances of gratitude, affection, reverence, and the like, force is excluded by the very idea of the duty, which must be voluntary, or cannot exist at all.

Wherever the right is imperfect, the corresponding obligation is so too. I am obliged to prefer the best candidate, to relieve the poor, be grateful to my benefactors, take care of my children, and reverence my parents; but in all these cases, my obligation, like their right, is imperfect.

I call these obligations "imperfect" in conformity to the established language of writers upon the subject. The term, however, seems ill chosen on this account, that it leads many to imagine, that there is less guilt in the violation of an imperfect obligation, than of a perfect one: which is a groundless notion. For an obligation being perfect or imperfect, determines only whether violence may or may not be employed to enforce it; and determines nothing else. The degree of guilt incurred by violating the obligation, is a different thing, and is determined by circumstances altogether independent of this distinction. A man who, by a partial, prejudiced, or corrupt vote, disappoints a worthy candidate of a station in life, upon which his hopes, possibly, or livelihood, depended, and who thereby grievously discourages merit and emulation in others, commits, I am persuaded, a much greater crime, than if he filched a book out of a library, or picked a pocket of a handkerchief; though in the one case he violates only an imperfect right, in the other a perfect one.

As positive precepts are often indeterminate in their extent, and as the indeterminateness of an obligation is that which makes it imperfect; it comes to pass, that positive precepts commonly produce an imperfect obligation.

Negative precepts or prohibitions, being generally precise, constitute accordingly perfect obligations.

The fifth commandment is positive, and the duty which results from it is imperfect.

The sixth commandment is negative, and imposes a perfect obligation.

Religion and virtue find their principal exercise among the imperfect obligations; the laws of civil society taking pretty good care of the rest.

CHAPTER XI.

The General Rights of Mankind.

By the General rights of Mankind, I mean the rights which belong to the species collectively; the original stock, as I may say, which they have since distributed among themselves.

These are,

I. A right to the fruits or vegetable produce of the earth.

The insensible parts of the creation are incapable of injury; and it is nugatory to inquire into the right, where the use can be attended with no injury. But it may be worth observing, for the sake of an inference which will appear below, that, as God had created us with a want and desire of food, and provided things suited by their nature to sustain and satisfy us, we may fairly presume, that he intended we should apply these things to that purpose.

2. A right to the flesh of animals.

This is a very different claim from the former. Some excuse seems necessary for the pain and loss which we occasion to brutes, by restraining them of their liberty, mutilating their bodies, and, at last, putting an end to their lives (which we suppose to be the whole of their existence,) for our pleasure or conveniency.

The reasons alleged in vindication of this practice, are the following: that the several species of brutes being created to prey upon one another, affords a kind of analogy to prove that the human species were intended to feed upon them; that, if let alone, they would over-run the earth, and exclude mankind from the occupation of it; that they are requited for what they suffer at our hands, by our care and protection.

Upon which reasons I would observe, that *the analogy* contended for is extremely lame; since brutes have no power to support life by any other means, and since we have; for the whole human species might subsist entirely upon fruit, pulse, herbs, and roots, as many tribes of Hindoos actually do. The two other reasons may be valid reasons, as far as they go; for, no doubt, if man had been supported entirely by vegetable food, a great part of those animals which die to furnish his table, would never have lived: but they by no means justify our right over the lives of brutes to the extent in which we exercise it. What danger is there, for instance, of fish interfering with us, in the occupation of their element? or what do *we* contribute to their support or preservation?

It seems to me, that it would be difficult to defend this right by any arguments which the light and order of nature afford; and that we are beholden for it to the permission recorded in Scripture, Gen. ix. 1, 2, 3: "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth: and the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered; every moving thing shall be meat for you; even as the green herb, have I given you all things." To Adam and his posterity had been granted, at the creation, "every green herb for meat," and nothing more. In the last clause of the passage now produced, the old grant is recited, and extended to the flesh of animals; "even as the green herb, have I given you all things." But this was not till after the flood; the inhabitants of the antediluvian world had therefore no such permission, that we know of. Whether they actually refrained from the flesh

of animals, is another question. Abel, we read, was a keeper of sheep; and for what purpose he kept them, except for food, is difficult to say, (unless it were sacrifices:) might not, however, some of the stricter sects among the antediluvians be scrupulous as to this point? and might not Noah and his family be of this description? for it is not probable that God would publish a permission, to authorise a practice, which had never been disputed.

Wanton, and, what is worse, studied cruelty to brutes, is certainly wrong, as coming within one of these reasons.

From reason then, or revelation, or from both together, it appears to be God Almighty's intention, that the productions of the earth, should be applied to the sustentation of human life. Consequently all waste and misapplication of these productions, is contrary to the Divine intention and will; and therefore wrong, for the same reason that any other crime is so. Such as, what is related of William the Conqueror, the converting of twenty manors into a forest for hunting; or, which is not much better, suffering them to continue in that state; or the letting of large tracts of land lie barren, because the owner cannot cultivate them, nor will part with them to those who can; or destroying, or suffering to perish, great part of an article of human provision, in order to enhance the price of the remainder, (which is said to have been, till lately, the case with fish caught upon the English coast;) or diminishing the breed of animals, by a wanton, or improvident, consumption of the young, as of the spawn of shell-fish, or the fry of salmon, by the use of unlawful nets, or at improper seasons: to this head may also be referred, what is the same evil in a smaller way, the expending of human food on superfluous dogs or horses; and, lastly, the reducing of the quantity, in order to alter the quality, and to alter it generally for the worse; as the distillation of spirits from bread-corn, the boiling down of solid meat for sauces, essences, &c.

This seems to be the lesson which our Saviour, after his manner, inculcates, when he bids his disciples "gather up the fragments that nothing be lost." And it opens indeed a new field of duty. Schemes of wealth or profit, prompt the active part of mankind to cast about, how they may convert their property to the most advantage; and their own advantage, and that of the public, commonly concur. But it has not as yet entered into the minds of mankind to reflect that it is a *duty*, to add what we can to the common stock of provision, by extracting out of our estates the most they will yield; or that it is any sin to neglect this.

From the same intention of God Almighty, we also deduce another conclusion, namely "that nothing ought to be made exclusive property, which can be conveniently enjoyed in common."

It is the general intention of God Almighty, that the produce of the earth be applied to the use of man. This appears from the constitution of nature; or, if you will, from his express declaration; and this is all that appears at first. Under this general donation, one man has the same right as another. You pluck an apple from a tree, or take a lamb from a flock, for your immediate use and nourishment, and I do the same; and we both plead for what we do, the general intention of the Supreme Proprietor. So far all is right: but you cannot claim the whole tree, or the whole flock, and exclude me from any share of them, and plead this general intention for what you do. The plea will not serve you; you must show something more. You must show, by probable arguments at least, that it is God's intention, that these things should be parcelled out to individuals; and that the established distribution, under which you claim, should be upholden. Show me this, and I am satisfied.

But until this be shown, the general intention, which has been made appear, and which is all that does appear, must prevail; and, under that, my title is as good as yours. Now there is no argument to induce such a presumption, but one; that the thing cannot be enjoyed at all, or enjoyed with the same, or with nearly the same advantage, while it continues in common, as when appropriated. This is true, where there is not enough for all, or where the article in question requires care or labour in the production or preservation: but where no such reason obtains, and the thing is in its nature capable of being enjoyed by as many as will, it seems an arbitrary usurpation upon the rights of mankind, to confine the use of it to any.

If a medicinal spring were discovered in a piece of ground which was private property, copious enough for every purpose to which it could be applied, I would award a compensation to the owner of the field, and a liberal profit to the author of the discovery, especially if he had bestowed pains or expense upon the search: but I question whether any human laws would be justified, or would justify the owner, in prohibiting mankind from the use of the water, or setting such a price upon it as would almost amount to a prohibition.

If there be fisheries, which are inexhaustible, as the cod-fishery upon the Banks of Newfoundland, and the herring-fishery in the British seas, are said to be; then all those conventions, by which one or two nations claim to themselves, and guaranty to each other, the exclusive enjoyment of these fisheries, are so many encroachments upon the general rights of mankind.

Upon the same principle may be determined a question, which makes a great figure in books of natural law, *utrum mare sit liberum?* that is, as I understand it, whether the exclusive right of navigating particular seas, or a control over the navigation of these seas, can be claimed, consistently with the law of nature, by any nation? What is necessary for each nation's safety, we allow: as their own bays, creeks, and harbours, the sea contiguous to, that is within cannon shot, or three leagues of their coast: and upon this principle of safety (if upon any principle,) must be defended the claim of the Venetian State to the Adriatic, of Denmark to the Baltic Sea, and of Great Britain, to the seas which invest the island. But, when Spain asserts a right to the Pacific Ocean, or Portugal to the Indian Seas, or when any nation extends its pretensions much beyond the limits of its own territories, they erect a claim which interferes with the benevolent designs of Providence, and which no human authority can justify.

3. Another right, which may be called a general right, as it is incidental to every man who is in a situation to claim it, is the right of extreme necessity; by which is meant, a right to use or destroy another's property when it is necessary for

our own preservation to do so; as a right to take, without or against the owner's leave, the first food, clothes, or shelter, we meet with, when we are in danger of perishing through want of them; a right to throw goods overboard to save the ship; or to pull down a house, in order to stop the progress of a fire; and a few other instances of the same kind. Of which right the foundation seems to be this: that when property was first instituted, the institution was not intended to operate to the destruction of any; therefore when such consequences would follow, all regard to it is superseded. Or rather, perhaps, these are the few cases, where the particular consequence exceeds the general consequence; where the remote mischief resulting from the violation of the general rule, is overbalanced by the immediate advantage.

Restitution, however, is due, when in our power; because the laws of property are to be adhered to, so far as consists with safety; and because restitution, which is one of those laws, supposes the danger to be over. But what is to be restored? Not the full value of the property destroyed, but what it was worth at the time of destroying it; which, considering the danger it was in of perishing, might be very little.

BOOK III.

RELATIVE DUTIES.

PART I.

OF RELATIVE DUTIES WHICH ARE DETERMINATE.

CHAPTER I.

Of Property.

If you should see a flock of pigeons in a field of corn: and if (instead of each picking where and what it liked, taking just as much as it wanted, and no more) you should see ninety-nine of them gathering all they got, into a heap; reserving nothing for themselves, but the chaff and the refuse; keeping this heap for one, and that the weakest, perhaps worst, pigeon of the flock; sitting round, and looking on, all the winter, whilst this one was devouring, throwing about, and wasting it; and if a pigeon more hardy or hungry than the rest, touched a grain of the hoard, all the others flying upon it, and tearing it to pieces; if you should see this, you would see nothing more than what is every day practised and established among men. Among men, you see the ninety-and-nine toiling and scraping together a heap of superfluities for one (and this one too, oftentimes the feeblest and worst of the whole set, a child, a woman, a madman, or a fool;) getting nothing for themselves all the while, but a little of the coarsest of the provision, which their own industry produces; looking quietly on, while they see the fruits of all their labour spent or spoiled; and if one of the number take or touch a particle of the hoard, the others joining against him, and hanging him for the theft.

CHAPTER II.

The Use of the Institution of Property.

There must be some very important advantages to account for an institution, which, in the view of it above given, is so paradoxical and unnatural.

The principal of these advantages are the following:

I. It increases the produce of the earth.

The earth, in climates like ours, produces little without cultivation: and none would be found willing to cultivate the ground, if others were to be admitted to an equal share of the produce. The same is true of the care of flocks and herds of tame animals.

Crabs and acorns, red deer, rabbits, game, and fish, are all which we should have to subsist upon in this country, if we trusted to the spontaneous productions of the soil: and it fares not much better with other countries. A nation of North American savages, consisting of two or three hundred, will take up, and be half starved upon, a tract of land, which in Europe, and with European management, would be sufficient for the maintenance of as many thousands.

In some fertile soils, together with great abundance of fish upon their coasts, and in regions, where clothes are unnecessary, a considerable degree of population may subsist without property in land; which is the case in the islands of Otaheite; but in less favoured situations, as in the country of New Zealand, though this sort of property obtain in a small degree, the inhabitants, for want of a more secure and regular establishment of it, are driven oftentimes by the scarcity of provision to devour one another.

II. It preserves the produce of the earth to maturity.

We may judge what would be the effects of a community of right to the productions of the earth, from the trifling specimens which we see of it at present. A cherry-tree in a hedge-row, nuts in a wood, the grass of an unstinted pasture, are seldom of much advantage to any body, because people do not wait for the proper season of reaping them. Corn, if any were sown, would never ripen; lambs and calves would never grow up to sheep and cows, because the first person that met them would reflect, that he had better take them as they are, than leave them for another.

III. It prevents contests.

War and waste, tumult and confusion, must be unavoidable and eternal, where there is not enough for all, and where there are no rules to adjust the division.

IV. It improves the conveniency of living.

This it does two ways. It enables mankind to divide themselves into distinct professions; which is impossible, unless a man can exchange the productions of his own art for what he wants from others; and exchange implies property. Much of the advantage of civilized over savage life, depends upon this. When a man is from necessity his own tailor, tent-maker, carpenter, cook, huntsman, and fisherman, it is not probable that he will be expert at any of his callings. Hence the rude habitations, furniture, clothing, and implements of savages; and the tedious length of time which all their operations require.

It likewise encourages those arts, by which the accommodations of human life are supplied, by appropriating to the artist the benefit of his discoveries and improvements; without which appro-

priation, ingenuity will never be exerted with effect.

Upon these several accounts we may venture, with a few exceptions, to pronounce, that even the poorest and the worst provided, in countries where property and the consequences of property prevail, are in a better situation, with respect to food, raiment, houses, and what are called the necessaries of life, than *any* are in places where most things remain in common.

The balance, therefore, upon the whole, must preponderate in favour of property with a manifest and great excess.

Inequality of property, in the degree in which it exists in most countries of Europe, abstractedly considered, is an evil: but it is an evil which flows from those rules concerning the acquisition and disposal of property, by which men are incited to industry, and by which the object of their industry, is rendered secure and valuable. If there be any great inequality unconnected with this origin, it ought to be corrected.

CHAPTER III.

The History of Property.

The first objects of property were the fruits which a man gathered, and the wild animals he caught; next to these, the tents or houses which he built, the tools he made use of to catch or prepare his food; and afterwards weapons of war and offence. Many of the savage tribes in North America have advanced no further than this yet; for they are said to reap their harvest, and return the produce of their market with foreigners, into the common hoard or treasury of the tribe. Flocks and herds of tame animals soon became property; Abel, the second from Adam, was a keeper of sheep; sheep and oxen, camels and asses, composed the wealth of the Jewish patriarchs, as they do still of the modern Arabs. As the world was first peopled in the East, where there existed a great scarcity of water, wells probably were next made property; as we learn from the frequent and serious mention of them in the Old Testament; the contentions and treaties about them;* and from its being recorded, among the most memorable achievements of very eminent men, that they dug, or discovered a well. Land, which is now so important a part of property, which alone our laws call real property, and regard upon all occasions with such peculiar attention, was probably not made property in any country, till long after the institution of many other species of property, that is, till the country became populous, and tillage began to be thought of. The first partition of an estate which we read of, was that which took place between Abram and Lot, and was one of the simplest imaginable: "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." There are no traces of property in land in Cæsar's account of Britain; little of it in the history of the Jewish patriarchs; none of it found amongst the nations of North America; the Scythians are expressly said to have appropriated their cattle and houses, but to have left their land in common.

Property in immoveables continued at first no longer than the occupation: that is, so long as a man's family continued in possession of a cave or whilst his flocks depastured upon a neighbouring hill, no one attempted, or thought he had a right to disturb or drive them out: but when the man quitted his cave, or changed his pasture, the first who found them unoccupied, entered upon them, by the same title as his predecessors; and made way in his turn for any one that happened to succeed him. All more permanent property in land was probably posterior to civil government and to laws; and therefore settled by these, or according to the will of the reigning chief.

* Genesis xxi. 25; xxvi. 18.

CHAPTER IV.

In what the Right of Property is Founded.

We now speak of Property in Land: and there is a difficulty in explaining the origin of this property, consistently with the law of nature; for the land was once, no doubt, common; and the question is, how any particular part of it could justly be taken out of the common, and so appropriated to the first owner, as to give him a better right to it than others; and, what is more, a right to exclude all others from it.

Moralists have given many different accounts of this matter; which diversity alone, perhaps, is a proof that none of them are satisfactory.

One tells us that mankind, when they suffered a particular person to occupy a piece of ground, by tacit consent relinquished their right to it; and as the piece of ground, they say, belonged to mankind collectively, and mankind thus gave up their right to the first peaceable occupier, it thenceforward became his property, and no one afterwards had a right to molest him in it.

The objection to this account is, that consent can never be presumed from silence, where the person whose consent is required knows nothing about the matter; which must have been the case with all mankind, except the neighbourhood of the place where the appropriation was made. And to suppose that the piece of ground previously belonged to the neighbourhood, and that they had a just power of conferring a right to it upon whom they pleased, is to suppose the question resolved, and a partition of land to have already taken place.

Another says, that each man's limbs and labour are his own exclusively; that, by occupying a piece of ground, a man inseparably mixes his labour with it; by which means the piece of ground becomes thenceforward his own, as you cannot take it from him without depriving him at the same time of something which is indisputably *his*.

This is Mr. Locke's solution; and seems indeed a fair reason, where the value of the labour bears a considerable proportion to the value of the thing; or where the thing derives its chief use and value from the labour. Thus game and fish, though they be common whilst at large in the woods or water, instantly become the property of the person that catches them; because an animal, when caught, is much more valuable than when at liberty; and this increase of value, which is inseparable from, and makes a great part of, the whole value, is strictly the property of the fowler or fisherman, being the produce of his personal labour. For the same reason, wood or iron, manufactured into utensils, becomes the property of the manufacturer; because the value of the workmanship far exceeds that of the materials

And upon a similar principle, a parcel of unappropriated ground, which a man should pare, burn, plough, harrow, and sow, for the production of corn, would justly enough be thereby made his own. But this will hardly hold, in the manner it has been applied, of taking a ceremonious possession of a tract of land, as navigators do of new-discovered islands, by erecting a standard, engraving an inscription, or publishing a proclamation to the birds and beasts; or of turning your cattle into a piece of ground, setting up a landmark, digging a ditch, or planting a hedge round it. Nor will even the clearing, manuring, and ploughing of a field, give the first occupier a right to it in perpetuity, and after this cultivation and all effects of it are ceased.

Another, and in my opinion a better, account of the first right of ownership, is the following: that, as God has provided these things for the use of all, he has of consequence given each leave to take of them what he wants; by virtue therefore of this leave, a man may appropriate what he stands in need of to his own use, without asking, or waiting for, the consent of others; in like manner as, when an entertainment is provided for the freeholders of a county, each freeholder goes, and eats and drinks what he wants or chooses, without having or waiting for the consent of the other guests.

But then this reason justifies property, as far as necessaries alone, or, at the most, as far as a competent provision for our natural exigences. For, in the entertainment we speak of (allowing the comparison to hold in all points,) although every particular freeholder may sit down and eat till he be satisfied, without any other leave than that of the master of the feast, or any other proof of that leave, than the general invitation, or the manifest design with which the entertainment is provided; yet you would hardly permit any one to fill his pockets or his wallet, or to carry away with him a quantity of provision to be hoarded up, or wasted, or given to his dogs, or stewed down into sauces, or converted into articles of superfluous luxury; especially if, by so doing, he pinched the guests at the lower end of the table.

These are the accounts that have been given of the matter by the best writers upon the subject, but were these accounts perfectly unexceptionable, they would none of them, I fear, avail us in vindicating our present claims of property in land, unless it were more probable than it is, that our estates were actually acquired at first, in some of the ways which these accounts suppose; and that a regular regard had been paid to justice, in every successive transmission of them since; for, if one link in the chain fail, every title posterior to it falls to the ground.

The real foundation of our right is, THE LAW OF THE LAND.

It is the intention of God, that the produce of the earth be applied to the use of man: this intention cannot be fulfilled without establishing property; it is consistent, therefore, with his will, that property be established. The land cannot be divided into separate property, without leaving it to the law of the country to regulate that division: it is consistent therefore with the same will, that the law should regulate the division; and, consequently, "consistent with the will of God," or, "right," that I should possess that share which these regulations assign me.

By whatever circuitous train of reasoning you attempt to derive this right, it must terminate at last in the will of God; the straightest therefore, and shortest way of arriving at this will, is the best.

Hence it appears, that my right to an estate does not at all depend upon the manner or justice of the original acquisition; nor upon the justice of each subsequent change of possession. It is not, for instance, the less, nor ought it to be impeached, because the estate was taken possession of at first by a family of aboriginal Britons, who happened to be stronger than their neighbours; nor because the British possessor was turned out by a Roman, or the Roman by a Saxon invader; nor because it was seized, without color of right or reason, by a follower of the Norman adventurer; from whom, after many interruptions of fraud and violence, it has at length devolved to me.

Nor does the owner's right depend upon the *expediency* of the law which gives it to him. On one side of a brook, an estate descends to the eldest son; on the other side, to all the children alike. The right of the claimants under both laws of inheritance is equal; though the expediency of such opposite rules must necessarily be different.

The principles we have laid down upon this subject apparently tend to a conclusion of which a bad use is apt to be made. As the right of property depends upon the law of the land, it seems to follow, that a man has a right to keep and take every thing which the law will allow him to keep and take; which in many cases will authorize the most flagitious chicanery. If a creditor upon a simple contract neglect to demand his debt for six years, the debtor may refuse to pay it; would it be *right* therefore to do so, where he is conscious of the justice of the debt? If a person, who is under twenty-one years of age, contract a bargain (other than for necessaries,) he may avoid it by pleading his minority: but would this be a fair plea, where the bargain was originally just?—The distinction to be taken in such cases is this: With the law, we acknowledge, resides the disposal of property: so long, therefore, as we keep within the design and intention of a law, that law will justify us as well *in foro conscientiæ*, as *in foro humano*, whatever be the equity or expediency of the law itself. But when we convert to one purpose, a rule or expression of law, which is intended for another purpose, then we plead in our justification, not the intention of the law, but the words; that is, we plead a dead letter, which can signify nothing; for words *without* meaning or intention, have no force or effect in justice; much less, words taken *contrary* to the meaning and intention of the speaker or writer To apply this distinction to the examples just now proposed:—in order to protect men against antiquated demands, from which it is not probable they should have preserved the evidence of their discharge, the law prescribes a limited time to certain species of private securities, beyond which it will not enforce them, or lend its assistance to the recovery of the debt. If a man be ignorant or dubious of the justice of the demand made upon him, he may conscientiously plead this limitation; because he *applies the rule of law to the purpose for which it was intended*. But when he refuses to pay a debt, of the reality of which he is conscious, he cannot, as before, plead the intention of the statute, and the supreme authority of law, unless he could

show, that the law *intended* to interpose its supreme authority, to acquit men of debts, of the existence and justice of which they were themselves sensible. Again, to preserve youth from the practices and impositions to which their inexperience exposes them, the law compels the payment of no debts incurred within a certain age, nor the performance of any engagements, except for such necessaries as are suited to their condition and fortunes. If a young person therefore perceive that he has been practised or imposed upon, he may honestly avail himself of the privilege of his nonage, to defeat the circumvention. But, if he shelter himself under this privilege, to avoid a fair obligation, or an equitable contract, he extends the privilege to a case, in which it is not allowed by intention of law, and in which consequently it does not, in natural justice, exist.

As property is the principal subject of justice, or of "the determinate relative duties," we have put down what we had to say upon *it* in the first place: we now proceed to state these duties in the best order we can.

CHAPTER V.

Promises.

I. *From whence the obligation to perform promises arises.*
II. *In what sense promises are to be interpreted.*
III. *In what cases promises are not binding.*

I. *From whence the obligation to perform promises arises.*

They who argue from innate moral principles, suppose a sense of the obligation of promises to be one of them; but without assuming this, or any thing else, without proof, the obligation to perform promises may be deduced from the necessity of such a conduct to the well-being, or the existence indeed, of human society.

Men act from expectation. Expectation is in most cases determined by the assurances and engagements which we receive from others. If no dependence could be placed upon these assurances, it would be impossible to know what judgment to form of many future events, or how to regulate our conduct with respect to them. Confidence therefore in promises, is essential to the intercourse of human life; because, without it, the greatest part of our conduct would proceed upon chance. But there could be no confidence in promises, if men were not obliged to perform them; the obligation therefore to perform promises, is essential to the same ends, and in the same degree.

Some may imagine, that if this obligation were suspended, a general caution and mutual distrust would ensue, which might do as well: but this is imagined, without considering how, every hour of our lives, we trust to, and depend upon, others; and how impossible it is, to stir a step, or, what is worse, to sit still a moment, without such trust and dependence. I am now writing at my ease, not doubting (or rather never distrusting, and therefore never thinking about it) that the butcher will send in the joint of meat which I ordered; that his servant will bring it; that my cook will dress it; that my footman will serve it up; that I shall find it upon table at one o'clock. Yet have I nothing for all this, but the promise of the butcher, and the implied promise of his servant and mine. And the same holds of the most important as well as the most familiar occurrences of social life. In the one, the intervention of promises is formal, and is seen and acknowledged; our instance, therefore, is intended to show it in the other, where it is not so distinctly observed.

II. *In what sense promises are to be interpreted.*

Where the terms of promise admit of more senses than one, the promise is to be performed "in that sense in which the promiser apprehended, at the time that the promisee received it."

It is not the sense in which the promiser actually intended it, that always governs the interpretation of an equivocal promise; because, at that rate, you might excite expectations, which you never meant, nor would be obliged to satisfy. Much less is it the sense, in which the promisee actually received the promise; for, according to that rule, you might be drawn into engagements which you never designed to undertake. It must, therefore, be the sense (for there is no other remaining) in which the promiser believed that the promisee accepted his promise.

This will not differ from the actual intention of the promiser, where the promise is given without collusion or reserve: but we put the rule in the above form, to exclude evasion in cases in which the popular meaning of a phrase, and the strict grammatical signification of the words differ; or, in general, wherever the promiser attempts to make his escape through some ambiguity in the expressions which he used.

Temures promised the garrison of Sebastia, that, if they would surrender, *no blood should be shed*. The garrison surrendered; and Temures buried them all alive. Now Temures fulfilled the promise in one sense, and in the sense too in which he intended it at the time; but not the sense in which the garrison of Sebastia actually received it, nor in the sense in which Temures himself knew that the garrison received it: which last sense, according to our rule, was the sense in which he was in conscience bound to have performed it.

From the account we have given of the obligation of promises, it is evident, that this obligation depends upon the *expectations* which we knowingly and voluntarily excite. Consequently, any action or conduct towards another, which we are sensible excites expectations in that other, is as much a promise, and creates as strict an obligation, as the most express assurances. Taking, for instance, a kinsman's child, and educating him for a liberal profession, or in a manner suitable only for the heir of a large fortune, as much obliges us to place him in that profession, or to leave him such a fortune, as if we had given him a promise to do so under our hands and seals. In like manner, a great man, who encourages an indigent retainer; or a minister of state, who distinguishes and caresses at his levee one who is in a situation to be obliged by his patronage; engages, by such behaviour, to provide for him.—This is the foundation of *tacit promises*.

You may either simply declare your present intention, or you may accompany your declaration with an engagement to abide by it, which constitutes a complete promise. In the first case, the duty is satisfied, if you were *sincere* at the time, that is if you entertained at the time the intention

you expressed, however soon, or for whatever reason, you afterwards change it. In the latter case, you have parted with the liberty of changing. All this is plain: but it must be observed, that most of those forms of speech, which, strictly taken, amount to no more than declarations of present intention, do yet, in the usual way of understanding them, excite the expectation, and therefore carry with them the force of absolute promises. Such as, "I intend you this place"—"I design to leave you this estate"—"I purpose giving you my vote"—"I mean to serve you."—In which, although the "intention," the "design," the "purpose," the "meaning," be expressed in words of the present time, yet you cannot afterwards recede from them without a breach of good faith. If you choose therefore to make known your present intention, and yet to reserve to yourself the liberty of changing it, you must guard your expressions by an aditional clause, as, "I intend *at present*," —"*if I do not alter*,"—or the like. And after all, as there can be no reason for communicating your intention, but to excite some degree of expectation or other, a wanton change of an intention which is once disclosed, always disappoints somebody; and is always, for that reason, wrong.

There is, in some men, an infirmity with regard to promises, which often betrays them into great distress. From the confusion, or hesitation, or obscurity, with which they express themselves, especially when overawed or taken by surprise, they sometimes encourage expectations, and bring upon themselves demands, which, possibly, they never dreamed of. This is a want, not so much of integrity, as of presence of mind.

III. *In what cases promises are not binding.*

1. Promises are not binding, where the performance is *impossible*.

But observe, that the promiser is guilty of a fraud, if he be secretly aware of the impossibility, at the time of making the promise. For, when any one promises a thing, he asserts his belief, at least, of the possibility of performing it; as no one can accept or understand a promise under any other supposition. Instances of this sort are the following: The minister promises a place, which he knows to be engaged, or not at his disposal:—A father, in settling marriage-articles, promises to leave his daughter an estate, which he knows to be entailed upon the heir male of his family:—A merchant promises a ship, or share of a ship, which he is privately advised is lost at sea:—An incumbent promises to resign a living, being previously assured that his resignation will not be accepted by the bishop. The promiser, as in these cases, with knowledge of the impossibility, is justly answerable in an equivalent; but otherwise not.

When the promiser himself occasions the impossibility, it is neither more nor less than a direct breach of the promise; as when a soldier maims, or a servant disables himself, to get rid of his engagements.

2. Promises are not binding, where the performance is *unlawful*.

There are two cases of this: one, where the unlawfulness is known to the parties, at the time of making the promise; as where an assassin promises his employer to despatch his rival or his enemy; a servant to betray his master; a pimp to procure a mistress; or a *friend* to give his assistance in a scheme of seduction. The parties in these cases are not obliged to perform what the promise requires, *because they were under a prior obligation to the contrary*. From which prior obligation what is there to discharge them? Their promise,—their own act and deed.—But an obligation, from which a man can discharge himself by his own act, is no obligation at all. The guilt therefore of such promises lies in the making, not in the breaking of them; and if, in the interval betwixt the promise and the performance, a man so far recover his reflection, as to repent of his engagements, he ought certainly to break through them.

The other case is, where the unlawfulness did not exist, or was not known, at the time of making the promise; as where a merchant promises his correspondent abroad, to send him a ship load of corn at a time appointed, and before the time arrive, an embargo is laid upon the exportation of corn:—A woman gives a promise of marriage; before the marriage, she discovers that her intended husband is too nearly related to her, or that he has a wife yet living. In all such cases, where the contrary does not appear, it must be presumed that the parties supposed what they promised to be lawful, and that the promise proceeded entirely upon this supposition. The lawfulness therefore becomes a condition of the promise; which condition failing, the obligation ceases. Of the same nature was Herod's promise to his daughter-in-law, "that he would give her whatever she asked, even to the half of his kingdom." The promise was not unlawful in the terms in which Herod delivered it; and when it became so by the daughter's choice, by her demanding "John the Baptist's head," Herod was discharged from the obligation of it, for the reason now laid down, as well as for that given in the last paragraph.

This rule, "that promises are void, where the performance is unlawful," extends also to imperfect obligations: for, the reason of the rule holds of all obligations. Thus, if you promise a man a place, or your vote, and he afterwards render himself unfit to receive either, you are absolved from the obligation of your promise; or, if a better candidate appear, and it be a case in which you are bound by oath, or otherwise, to govern yourself by the qualification, the promise must be broken through.

And here I would recommend, to young persons especially, a caution, from the neglect of which many involve themselves in embarrassment and disgrace; and that is, "never to give a promise, which may interfere, in the event, with their duty;" for, if it do so interfere, their duty must be discharged, though at the expense of their promise, and not unusually of their good name.

The specific performance of promises is reckoned a perfect obligation. And many casuists have laid down, in opposition to what has been here asserted, that, where a perfect and an imperfect obligation clash, the perfect obligation is to be preferred. For which opinion, however, there seems to be no reason, but what arises from the terms "perfect" and "imperfect," the impropriety of which has been remarked above. The truth is, of two contradictory obligations, that ought to prevail which is prior in point of time.

It is the *performance* being unlawful, and not unlawfulness in the subject or motive of the promise, which destroys its validity: therefore a bribe, after the vote is given; the wages of prostitution;

the reward of any crime, after the crime is committed; ought, if promised, to be paid. For the sin and mischief, by this supposition, are over; and will be neither more nor less for the performance of the promise.

In like manner, a promise does not lose its obligation merely because it proceeded from an *unlawful motive*. A certain person, in the lifetime of his wife, who was then sick, had paid his addresses, and promised marriage, to another woman;—the wife died; and the woman demanded performance of the promise. The man, who, it seems, had changed his mind, either felt or pretended doubts concerning the obligation of such a promise, and referred his case to Bishop Sanderson, the most eminent, in this kind of knowledge, of his time. Bishop Sanderson, after writing a dissertation upon the question, adjudged the promise to be void. In which, however, upon our principles, he was wrong; for, however criminal the affection might be, which induced the promise, the performance, when it was demanded, was lawful; which is the only lawfulness required.

A promise cannot be deemed unlawful, where it produces, when performed, no effect, beyond what would have taken place had the promise never been made. And this is the single case, in which the obligation of a promise will justify a conduct, which, unless it had been promised, would be unjust. A captive may lawfully recover his liberty, by a promise of neutrality; for his conqueror takes nothing by the promise, which he might not have secured by his death or confinement; and neutrality would be innocent in him, although criminal in another. It is manifest, however, that promises which come into the place of coercion, can extend no further than to passive compliance; for coercion itself could compel no more. Upon the same principle, promises of secrecy ought not to be violated, although the public would derive advantage from the discovery. Such promises contain no unlawfulness in them, to destroy their obligation: for, as the information would not have been imparted upon any other condition, the public lose nothing by the promise, which they would have gained without it.

3. Promises are not binding, where they *contradict a former promise.*

Because the performance is then unlawful; which resolves this case into the last.

4. Promises are not binding *before acceptance;* that is, before notice given to the promisee; for, where the promise is beneficial, if notice be given, acceptance may be presumed. Until the promise be communicated to the promisee, it is the same only as a resolution in the mind of the promiser, which may be altered at pleasure. For no expectation has been excited, therefore none can be disappointed.

But suppose I declare my intention to a third person, who, without any authority from me, conveys my declaration to the promisee; is that such a notice as will be binding upon me? It certainly is not: for I have not done that which constitutes the essence of a promise;—I have not *voluntarily* excited expectation.

5. Promises are not binding which are *released by the promisee.*

This is evident: but it may be sometimes doubted who the promisee is. If I give a promise *to* A, of a place or vote for B; as to a father for his son; to an uncle for his nephew; to a friend of mine, for a relation or friend of his; then A is the promisee, whose consent I must obtain, to be released from the engagement.

If I promise a place or vote to B *by* A, that is, if A be a messenger to convey the promise, as if I should say, "You may tell B that he shall have this place, or may depend upon my vote;" or if A be employed to introduce B's request, and I answer in any terms which amount to a compliance with it: then B is the promisee.

Promises to one person, for the benefit of another, are not released by the death of the promisee; for, his death neither makes the performance impracticable, nor implies any consent to release the promiser from it.

6. *Erroneous* promises are not binding in certain cases; as

1. Where the error proceeds from the mistake or misrepresentation of the promisee.

Because a promise evidently supposes the truth of the account, which the promisee relates in order to obtain it. A beggar solicits your charity, by a story of the most pitiable distress; you promise to relieve him, if he will call again:—In the interval you discover his story to be made up of lies;—this discovery, no doubt, releases you from your promise. One who wants your service, describes the business or office for which he would engage you;—you promise to undertake it;—when you come to enter upon it, you find the profits less, the labour more, or some material circumstance different from the account he gave you:—In such case, you are not bound by your promise.

2. When the promise is understood by the promisee to proceed upon a certain supposition, or when the promiser apprehended it to be so understood, and that supposition turns out to be false; then the promise is not binding.

This intricate rule will be best explained by an example. A father receives an account from abroad, of the death of his only son;—soon after which, he promises his fortune to his nephew.—The account turns out to be false.—The father, we say, is released from his promise; not merely because he never would have made it, had he known the truth of the case,—for that alone will not do;—but because the nephew also himself understood the promise to proceed upon the supposition of his cousin's death: or, at least his uncle thought he so understood it; and could not think otherwise. The promise proceeded upon this supposition in the promiser's own apprehension, and, as he believed, in the apprehension of both parties; and this belief of his, is the precise circumstance which sets him free. The foundation of the rule is plainly this: a man is bound only to satisfy the expectation which he intended to excite; whatever condition therefore he intended to subject that expectation to, becomes an essential condition of the promise.

Errors, which come not within this description, do not annul the obligation of a promise. I promise a candidate my vote;—presently another candidate appears, for whom I certainly would have reserved it, had I been acquainted with his design. Here therefore, as before, my promise proceeded from an error; and I never should have given such a promise, had I been aware of the truth of the case, as it has turned out.—But the promisee did not know this;—*he* did not receive the promise, subject to any such condition, or as proceeding from any such supposition; nor did I

at the time imagine he so received it. This error, therefore, of mine, must fall upon my own head, and the promise be observed notwithstanding. A father promises a certain fortune with his daughter, supposing himself to be worth so much—his circumstances turn out, upon examination, worse than he was aware of. Here again the promise was erroneous, but, for the reason assigned in the last case, will nevertheless be obligatory.

The case of erroneous promises, is attended with some difficulty: for, to allow every mistake, or change of circumstances, to dissolve the obligation of a promise, would be to allow a latitude, which might evacuate the force of almost all promises: and on the other hand, to gird the obligation so tight, as to make no allowances for manifest and fundamental errors, would, in many instances, be productive of great hardship and absurdity.

It has long been controverted amongst moralists, whether promises be binding, which are extorted by violence or fear. The obligation of all promises results, we have seen, from the necessity or the use of that confidence which mankind repose in them. The question, therefore, whether these promises are binding, will depend upon this; whether mankind, upon the whole, are benefited by the confidence placed on such promises? A highwayman attacks you—and being disappointed of his booty, threatens or prepares to murder you; —you promise, with many solemn asseverations, that if he will spare your life, he shall find a purse of money left for him, at a place appointed;—upon the faith of this promise, he forbears from further violence. Now, your life was saved by the confidence reposed in a promise extorted by fear; and the lives of many others may be saved by the same. This is a good consequence. On the other hand, confidence in promises like these, greatly facilitates the perpetration of robberies: they may be made the instruments of almost unlimited extortion. This is a bad consequence: and in the question between the importance of these opposite consequences, resides the doubt concerning the obligations of such promises.

There are other cases which are plainer; as where a magistrate confines a disturber of the public peace in jail, till he promise to behave better; or a prisoner of war promises, if set at liberty, to return within a certain time. These promises, say moralists, are binding, because the violence or duress is just; but, the truth is, because there is the same use of confidence in these promises, as of confidence in the promises of a person at perfect liberty.

Vows are promises to God. The obligation cannot be made out upon the same principle as that of other promises. The violation of them, nevertheless, implies a want of reverence to the Supreme Being; which is enough to make it sinful.

There appears no command or encouragement in the Christian Scriptures to make vows; much less any authority to break through them when they are made. The few instances* of vows which we read of in the New Testament, were religiously observed.

The rules we have laid down concerning promises, are applicable to vows. Thus Jephtha's vow, taken in the sense in which that transaction is commonly understood, was not binding; because the performance, in that contingency, became unlawful.

* Acts xviii. 18. xxi. 23.

CHAPTER VI.

Contracts.

A CONTRACT is a mutual promise. The obligation therefore of contracts, the sense in which they are to be interpreted, and the cases where they are not binding, will be the same as of promises.

From the principle established in the last chapter, "that the obligation of promises is to be measured by the expectation which the promiser any how voluntarily and knowingly excites," results a rule, which governs the construction of all contracts, and is capable, from its simplicity, of being applied with great ease and certainty, viz. That

Whatever is expected by one side, and known to be so expected by the other, is to be deemed a part or condition of the contract.

The several kinds of contracts, and the order in which we propose to consider them, may be exhibited at one view, thus

- Contracts of
  - Sale.
  - Hazard.
  - Lending of
    - Inconsumable Property.
    - Money.
  - Labour.
    - Service.
    - Commissions.
    - Partnership.
    - Offices.

CHAPTER VII.

Contracts of Sale.

THE rule of justice, which wants with most anxiety to be inculcated in the making of bargains, is, that the seller is bound in conscience to disclose the faults of what he offers to sale. Amongst other methods of proving this, one may be the following:

I suppose it will be allowed, that to advance a direct falsehood, in recommendation of our wares, by ascribing to them some quality which we know that they have not, is dishonest. Now compare with this the designed concealment of some fault, which we know that they have. The motives and the effects of actions are the only points of comparison, in which their moral quality can differ; but the motive in these two cases is the same, viz. to procure a higher price than we expect otherwise to obtain: the effect, that is, the prejudice to the buyer, is also the same; for he finds himself equally out of pocket by his bargain, whether the commodity, when he gets home with it, turn out worse than he had supposed, by the want of some quality which he expected, or the discovery of some fault which he did not expect. If therefore actions be the same, as to all moral purposes, which proceed from the same motives,

and produce the same effects; it is making a distinction without a difference, to esteem it a *cheat* to magnify beyond the truth the virtues of what we have to sell, but not to conceal its faults.

It adds to the value of this kind of honesty, that the faults of many things are of a nature not to be known by any, but by the persons who have used them; so that the buyer has no security from imposition, but in the ingenuousness and integrity of the seller.

There is one exception, however, to this rule; namely, where the silence of the seller implies some fault in the thing to be sold, and where the buyer has a compensation in the price for the risk which he runs: as where a horse, in a London repository, is sold by public auction, without warranty; the want of warranty is notice of some unsoundness, and produces a proportionable abatement in the price.

To this of concealing the faults of what we want to put off, may be referred the practice of passing bad money. This practice we sometimes hear defended by a vulgar excuse, that we have taken the money for good, and must therefore get rid of it. Which excuse is much the same as if one, who had been robbed upon the highway, should allege that he had a right to reimburse himself out of the pocket of the first traveller he met; the justice of which reasoning, the traveller possibly may not comprehend.

Where there exists no monopoly or combination, the market-price is always a fair price; because it will always be proportionable to the use and scarcity of the article. Hence, there need be no scruple about demanding or taking the market-price; and all those expressions, "provisions are extravagantly dear," "corn bears an unreasonable price," and the like, import no unfairness or unreasonableness in the seller.

If your tailor or your draper charge, or even ask of you, more for a suit of clothes, than the market-price, you complain that you are imposed upon; you pronounce the tradesman who makes such a charge, dishonest; although, as the man's goods were his own, and he had a right to prescribe the terms upon which he would consent to part with them, it may be questioned what dishonesty there can be in the case, or wherein the imposition consists. Whoever opens a shop, or in any manner exposes goods to public sale, virtually engages to deal with his customers at a market-price; because it is upon the faith and opinion of such an engagement, that any one comes within his shop doors, or offers to treat with him. This is expected by the buyer; is known to be so expected by the seller; which is enough, according to the rule delivered above, to make it a part of the contract between them, though not a syllable be said about it. The breach of this implied contract constitutes the fraud inquired after.

Hence, if you disclaim any such engagement, you may set what value you please upon your property. If, upon being asked to sell a house, you answer that the house suits your fancy or conveniency, and that you will not turn yourself out of it, under such a price; the price fixed may be double of what the house cost, or would fetch at a public sale, without any imputation of injustice or extortion upon you.

If the thing sold, be damaged, or perish, between the sale and the delivery, ought the buyer to bear the loss, or the seller? This will depend upon the particular construction of the contract. If the seller, either expressly, or by implication, or by custom, engage to *deliver* the goods; as if I buy a set of china, and the china-man ask me to what place he shall bring or send them, and they be broken in the conveyance, the seller must abide by the loss. If the thing sold, remain with the seller, at the instance, or for the conveniency of the buyer, then the buyer undertakes the risk; as if I buy a horse, and mention, that I will send for it on such a day (which is in effect desiring that it may continue with the seller till I do send for it,) then, whatever misfortune befalls the horse in the meantime, must be at my cost.

And here, once for all, I would observe, that innumerable questions of this sort are determined solely by *custom;* not that custom possesses any proper authority to alter or ascertain the nature of right or wrong; but because the contracting parties are presumed to include in their stipulation, all the conditions which custom has annexed to contracts of the same sort: and when the usage is notorious, and no exception made to it, this presumption is generally agreeable to the fact.*

If I order a pipe of port from a wine-merchant abroad; at what period the property passes from the merchant to me; whether upon delivery of the wine at the merchant's warehouse; upon its being put on shipboard at Oporto; upon the arrival of the ship in England at its destined port; or not till the wine be committed to my servants, or deposited in my cellar; are all questions which admit of no decision, but what custom points out. Whence, in justice, as well as law, what is called the *custom of merchants,* regulates the construction of mercantile concerns.

CHAPTER VIII.

Contracts of Hazard.

By Contracts of Hazard, I mean gaming and insurance.

What some say of this kind of contracts, "that one side ought not to have any advantage over the other," is neither practicable nor true. It is not practicable; for that perfect equality of skill and judgment, which this rule requires, is seldom to be met with. I might not have it in my power, to play with fairness a game at cards, billiards, or tennis; lay a wager at a horse-race; or underwrite a policy of insurance, once in a twelvemonth, if I must wait till I meet with a person, whose art, skill, and judgment in these matters, is neither greater nor less than my own. Nor is this equality requisite to the justice of the contract. One party may give to the other the whole of the stake, if he please, and the other party may justly accept it, if it be given him; much more therefore may one give to the other a part of the stake; or, what is exactly the same thing, an advantage in the chance of winning the whole.

* It happens here, as in many cases, that what the parties ought to do, and what a judge or arbitrator would award to be done, may be very different. What the parties ought to do by virtue of their contract, depends upon their consciousness at the time of making it; whereas a third person finds it necessary to found his judgment upon presumptions, which presumptions may be false, although the most probable that he could proceed by.

The proper restriction is, that neither side have an advantage by means of which the other is not aware; for this is an advantage taken, without being *given*. Although the event be still an uncertainty, your advantage in the chance has a certain value; and so much of the stake, as that value amounts to, is taken from your adversary without his knowledge, and therefore without his consent. If I sit down to a game at whist, and have an advantage over the adversary, by means of a better memory, closer attention, or a superior knowledge of the rules and chances of the game, the advantage is fair; because it is obtained by means of which the adversary is aware: for he is aware, when he sits down with me, that I shall exert the skill that I possess to the utmost. But if I gain an advantage by packing the cards, glancing my eye into the adversaries' hands, or by concerted signals with my partner, it is a dishonest advantage; because it depends upon means which the adversary never suspects that I make use of.

The same distinction holds of all contracts into which chance enters. If I lay a wager at a horse-race, founded upon the conjecture I form from the appearance, and character, and breed, of the horses, I am justly entitled to any advantage which my judgment gives me: but, if I carry on a clandestine correspondence with the jockeys, and find out from them, that a trial has been actually made, or that it is settled beforehand which horse shall win the race; all such information is so much fraud, because derived from sources which the other did not suspect, when he proposed or accepted the wager.

In speculations in trade, or in the stocks, if I exercise my judgment upon the general aspect and prospect of public affairs, and deal with a person who conducts himself by the same sort of judgment; the contract has all the equality in it which is necessary: but if I have access to secrets of state at home, or private advice of some decisive measure or event abroad, I cannot avail myself of these advantages with justice, because they are excluded by the contract, which proceeded upon the supposition that I had no such advantage.

In insurances, in which the underwriter computes his risk entirely from the account given by the person insured, it is absolutely necessary to the justice and validity of the contract, that this account be exact and complete.

CHAPTER IX.

Contracts of Lending of Inconsumable Property.

When the identical loan is to be returned, as a book, a horse, a harpsichord, it is called *inconsumable;* in opposition to corn, wine, money, and those things which perish, or are parted with, in the use, and can therefore only be restored in kind.

The questions under this head are few and simple. The first is, if the thing lent be lost or damaged, who ought to bear the loss or damage? If it be damaged by the use, or by accident in the use, for which it was lent, the lender ought to bear it; as if I hire a job-coach, the wear, tear, and soiling of the coach, must belong to the lender; or a horse, to go a particular journey, and in going the proposed journey, the horse die or be lamed, the loss must be the lender's: on the contrary, if the damage be occasioned by the fault of the borrower, or by accident in some use for which it was not lent, then the borrower must make it good; as if the coach be overturned or broken to pieces by the carelessness of your coachman; or the horse be hired to take a morning's ride upon, and you go a-hunting with him, or leap him over hedges, or put him into your cart or carriage, and he be strained, or staked, or galled, or accidentally hurt, or drop down dead, whilst you are thus using him; you must make satisfaction to the owner.

The two cases are distinguished by this circumstance: that in one case, the owner foresees the damage or risk, and therefore consents to undertake it; in the other case he does not.

It is possible that an estate or a house may, during the term of a lease, be so increased or diminished in its value, as to become worth much more or much less, than the rent agreed to be paid for it. In some of which cases it may be doubted, to whom, of natural right, the advantage or disadvantage belongs. The rule of justice seems to be this: If the alteration might be *expected* by the parties, the hirer must take the consequence; if it could not, the owner. An orchard, or a vineyard, or a mine, or a fishery, or a decoy, may this year yield nothing, or next to nothing, yet the tenant shall pay his rent; and if they next year produce tenfold the usual profit, no more shall be demanded; because the produce is in its nature precarious, and this variation might be expected. If an estate in the fens of Lincolnshire, or the isle of Ely, be overflowed with water, so as to be incapable of occupation, the tenant, notwithstanding, is bound by his lease; because he entered into it with a knowledge and foresight of the danger. On the other hand, if, by the irruption of the sea into a country where it was never known to have come before, by the change of the course of a river, the fall of a rock, the breaking out of a volcano, the bursting of a moss, the incursions of an enemy, or by a mortal contagion amongst the cattle; if, by means like these, an estate change or lose its value, the loss shall fall upon the owner; that is, the tenant shall either be discharged from his agreement, or be entitled to an abatement of rent. A house in London, by the building of a bridge, the opening of a new road or street, may become of ten times its former value; and, by contrary causes, may be as much reduced in value: here also, as before, the owner, not the hirer, shall be affected by the alteration. The reason upon which our determination proceeds is this; that changes such as these, being neither foreseen, nor provided for, by the contracting parties, form no part or condition of the contract; and therefore ought to have the same effect as if no contract at all had been made, (for none was made with respect to *them*,) that is, ought to fall upon the owner.

CHAPTER X.

Contracts concerning the Lending of Money.

There exists no reason in the law of nature, why a man should not be paid for the lending of his money, as well as of any other property into which the money might be converted.

The scruples that have been entertained upon

this head, and upon the foundation of which, the receiving of interest or usury (for they formerly meant the same thing) was once prohibited in almost all Christian countries,* arose from a passage in the law of MOSES, Deuteronomy, xxiii. 19, 20: "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury; unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury."

This prohibition is now generally understood to have been intended for the Jews alone, as part of the civil or political law of that nation, and calculated to preserve amongst themselves that distribution of property, to which many of their institutions were subservient; as the marriage of an heiress within her own tribe; of a widow who was left childless, to her husband's brother; the year of jubilee, when alienated estates reverted to the family of the original proprietor:—regulations which were never thought to be binding upon any but the commonwealth of Israel.

This interpretation is confirmed, I think, beyond all controversy, by the distinction made in the law, between a Jew and a foreigner:—"unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou mayest not lend upon usury;" a distinction which could hardly have been admitted into a law, which the Divine Author intended to be of moral and of universal obligation.

The rate of interest has in most countries been regulated by law. The Roman law allowed of twelve pounds per cent. which Justinian reduced at one stroke to four pounds. A statute of the thirteenth year of Queen Elizabeth, which was the first that tolerated the receiving of interest in England at all, restrained it to ten pounds per cent.; a statute of James the first, to eight pounds; of Charles the Second, to six pounds; of Queen Anne, to five pounds, on pain of forfeiture of treble the value of the money lent: at which rate and penalty the matter now stands. The policy of these regulations is, to check the power of accumulating wealth without industry; to give encouragement to trade, by enabling adventurers in it to borrow money at a moderate price; and of late years to enable the state to borrow the subject's money itself.

Compound interest, though forbidden by the law of England, is agreeable enough to natural equity; for interest detained after it is due, becomes, to all intents and purposes, part of the sum lent.

It is a question which sometimes occurs, how money borrowed in one country ought to be paid in another, where the relative value of the precious metals is not the same. For example, suppose I borrow a hundred guineas in London, where each guinea is worth one-and-twenty shillings, and meet my creditor in the East Indies where a guinea is worth no more perhaps than nineteen; is it a satisfaction of the debt to return a hundred guineas, or must I make up so many times one-and-twenty shillings? I should think the latter; for it must be presumed, that my creditor, had he not lent me his guineas, would have disposed of them in such a manner, as to have now had, in the place of them, so many one-and-twenty shillings; and the question supposes that he neither intended, nor ought to be a sufferer, by parting with the possession of his money to me.

When the relative value of coin is altered by an act of the state, if the alteration would have extended to the identical pieces which were lent, it is enough to return an equal number of pieces of the same denomination, or their present value in any other. As, if guineas were reduced by act of parliament to twenty shillings, so many twenty shillings, as I borrowed guineas, would be a just repayment. It would be otherwise, if the reduction was owing to a debasement of the coin; for then respect ought to be had to the comparative value of the old guinea and the new.

Whoever borrows money, is bound in conscience to repay it. This, every man can see; but every man cannot see, or does not however reflect, that he is, in consequence, also bound to to use the means necessary to enable himself to repay it. "If he pay the money when he has it, or has it to spare, he does all that an honest man can do," and all, he imagines, that is required of him; whilst the previous measures, which are necessary to furnish him with that money, he makes no part of his care, nor observes to be as much his duty as the other; such as selling a family-seat or a family estate, contracting his plan of expense, laying down his equipage, reducing the number of his servants, or any of those humiliating sacrifices, which justice requires of a man in debt, the moment he perceives that he has no reasonable prospect of paying his debts without them. An expectation which depends upon the continuance of his own life, will not satisfy an honest man, if a better provision be in his power; for it is a breach of faith to subject a creditor; when we can help it, to the risk of our life, be the event what it will; that not being the security to which credit was given.

I know few subjects which have been more misunderstood, than the law which authorises the imprisonment of insolvent debtors. It has been represented as a gratuitous cruelty, which contributed nothing to the reparation of the creditor's loss, or to the advantage of the community. This prejudice arises principally from considering the sending of a debtor to gaol, as an act of private satisfaction to the creditor, instead of a public punishment. As an act of satisfaction or revenge, it is always wrong in the motive, and often intemperate and undistinguishing in the exercise. Consider it as a public punishment; founded upon the same reason, and subject to the same rules, as other punishments; and the justice of it, together with the degree to which it should be extended, and the objects upon whom it may be inflicted, will be apparent. There are frauds relating to insolvency, against which it is as necessary to provide punishment, as for any public crimes whatever: as where a man gets your money into his possession, and forthwith runs away with it; or, what is little better, squanders it in vicious expenses; or stakes it at the gaming-table; in the Alley; or upon wild adventures in trade; or is conscious at the time he borrows it, that he can never repay it; or wilfully puts it out of his power, by profuse living; or conceals his effects, or transfers them by collusion to another: not to mention the obstinacy of some debtors, who had rather rot in a gaol, than deliver up their estates;

* By a statute of JAMES the First, interest above eight pounds per cent. was prohibited, (and consequently under that rate allowed,) with this sage provision: *That this statute shall not be construed or expounded to allow the practice of usury in point of religion or conscience.*

for, to say the truth, the first absurdity is in the law itself, which leaves it in a debtor's power to withhold any part of his property from the claim of his creditors. The only question is, whether the punishment be properly placed in the hands of an exasperated creditor: for which it may be said, that these frauds are so subtile and versatile, that nothing but a discretionary power can overtake them; and that no discretion is likely to be so well informed, so vigilant, or so active, as that of the creditor.

It must be remembered, however, that the confinement of a debtor in a jail is a *punishment;* and that every punishment supposes a crime. To pursue, therefore, with the extremity of legal rigour, a sufferer, whom the fraud or failure of others, his own want of capacity, or the disappointments and miscarriages to which all human affairs are subject, have reduced to ruin, merely because we are provoked by our loss, and seek to relieve the pain we feel by that which we inflict, is repugnant not only to humanity, but to justice: for it is to pervert a provision of law, designed for a different and a salutary purpose, to the gratification of private spleen and resentment. Any alteration in these laws, which could distinguish the degrees of guilt, or convert the service of the insolvent debtor to some public profit, might be an improvement; but any considerable mitigation of their rigour, under colour of relieving the poor, would increase their hardships. For whatever deprives the creditor of his power of coercion, deprives him of his security; and as this must add greatly to the difficulty of obtaining credit, the poor, especially the lower sort of tradesmen, are the first who would suffer by such a regulation. As tradesmen must buy *before* they sell, you would exclude from trade two thirds of those who now carry it on, if none were enabled to enter into it without a capital sufficient for prompt payments. An advocate, therefore, for the interests of this important class of the community, will deem it more eligible, that one out of a thousand should be sent to jail by his creditors, than that the nine hundred and ninety-nine should be straitened and embarrassed, and many of them lie idle by the want of credit.

CHAPTER XI.

Contracts of labour.

SERVICE.

SERVICE in this country is, as it ought to be, voluntary, and by contract; and the master's authority extends no further than the terms or equitable construction of the contract will justify.

The treatment of servants, as to diet, discipline, and accommodation, the kind and quantity of work to be required of them, the intermission, liberty, and indulgence to be allowed them, must be determined in a great measure by custom; for where the contract involves so many particulars, the contracting parties express a few perhaps of the principal, and, by mutual understanding, refer the rest to the known custom of the country in like cases.

A servant is not bound to obey the unlawful commands of his master; to minister, for instance, to his unlawful pleasures; or to assist him by unlawful practices in his profession; as in smuggling or adulterating the articles in which he deals. For the servant is bound by nothing but his own promise; and the obligation of a promise extends not to things unlawful.

For the same reason, the master's authority is no *justification* of the servant in doing wrong; for the servant's own promise, upon which that authority is founded, would be none.

Clerks and apprentices ought to be employed entirely in the profession or trade which they are intended to learn. Instruction is their hire; and to deprive them of the opportunities of instruction, by taking up their time with occupations foreign to their business, is to defraud them of their wages.

The master is responsible for what a servant does in the ordinary course of his employment; for it is done under a general authority committed to him, which is in justice equivalent to a specific direction. Thus, if I pay money to a banker's clerk, the banker is accountable; but not if I had paid it to his butler or his footman, whose business it is not to receive money. Upon the same principle, if I once send a servant to take up goods upon credit, whatever goods he afterwards takes up at the same shop, so long as he continues in my service, are justly chargeable to my account.

The law of this country goes great lengths in intending a kind of concurrence in the master, so as to charge him with the consequences of his servant's conduct. If an inn-keeper's servant rob his guests, the inn-keeper must make restitution; if a farrier's servant lame a horse, the farrier must answer for the damage; and still further, if your coachman or carter drive over a passenger in the road, the passenger may recover from you a satisfaction for the hurt he suffers. But these determinations stand, I think, rather upon the authority of the law, than any principle of natural justice.

There is a carelessness and facility in "giving characters," as it is called, of servants, especially when given in writing, or according to some established form, which, to speak plainly of it, is a cheat upon those who accept them. They are given with so little reserve and veracity, "that I should as soon depend," says the author of the Rambler, "upon an acquittal at the Old Bailey, by way of recommendation of a servant's honesty, as upon one of these characters." It is sometimes carelessness; and sometimes also to get rid of a bad servant without the uneasiness of a dispute; for which nothing can be pleaded but the most ungenerous of all excuses, that the person whom we deceive is a stranger.

There is a conduct the reverse of this, but more injurious, because the injury falls where there is no remedy; I mean the obstructing of a servant's advancement, because you are unwilling to spare his service. To stand in the way of your servant's interest, is a poor return for his fidelity; and affords slender encouragement for good behaviour, in this numerous and therefore important part of the community. It is a piece of injustice which, if practiced towards an equal, the law of honour would lay hold of; as it is, it is neither uncommon nor disreputable.

A master of a family is culpable, if he permit any vices among his domestics, which he might restrain by due discipline, and a proper interference. This results from the general obligation to prevent misery when in our power; and the

assurance which we have, that vice and misery at the long run go together. Care to maintain in his family a sense of virtue and religion, received the Divine approbation in the person of ABRAHAM, Gen. xviii. 19: "I know him, that he will command his children, and *his household* after him; and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment." And indeed no authority seems so well adapted to this purpose, as that of masters of families; because none operates upon the subjects of it with an influence so immediate and constant.

What the Christian Scriptures have delivered concerning the relation and reciprocal duties of masters and servants, breathes a spirit of liberality, very little known in ages when servitude was slavery; and which flowed from a habit of contemplating mankind under the common relation in which they stand to their Creator, and with respect to their interest in another existence;* "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling; in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; *with good will, doing service as to the Lord, and not to men;* knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the LORD, whether he be bond or free. And ye masters, do the same thing unto them, forbearing threatening; *knowing that your Master also is in heaven;* neither is there respect of persons with him." The idea of referring their service to God, of considering *him* as having appointed them their task, that they were doing *his* will, and were to look to *him* for their reward, was new; and affords a greater security to the master than any inferior principle, because it tends to produce a steady and cordial obedience, in the place of that constrained service, which can never be trusted out of sight, and which is justly enough called eye-service. The exhortation to masters, to keep in view their own subjection and accountableness, was no less seasonable.

CHAPTER XII.

Contracts of Labour.

COMMISSIONS.

WHOEVER undertakes another man's business, makes it his own, that is, promises to employ upon it the same care, attention, and diligence, that he would do if it were actually his own: for he knows that the business was committed to him with that expectation. And he promises nothing more than this. Therefore an agent is not obliged to wait, inquire, solicit, ride about the country, toil, or study, whilst there remains a possibility of benefiting his employer. If he exert so much of his activity, and use such caution, as the value of the business, in his judgment, deserves; that is, as he would have thought sufficient if the same interest of his own had been at stake, he has discharged his duty, although it should afterwards turn out, that by more activity, and longer perseverance, he might have concluded the business with greater advantage.

This rule defines the duty of factors, stewards, attorneys, and advocates.

One of the chief difficulties of an agent's situation is, to know how far he may depart from his instructions, when, from some change or discovery in the circumstances of his commission, he sees reason to believe that his employer, if he were present, would alter his intention. The latitude allowed to agents in this respect, will be different, according as the commission was confidential or ministerial; and according as the general rule and nature of the service require a prompt and precise obedience to orders, or not. An attorney, sent to treat for an estate, if he found out a flaw in the title, would desist from proposing the price he was directed to propose; and very properly. On the other hand, if the commander-in-chief of an army detach an officer under him upon a particular service, which service turns out more difficult, or less expedient, than was supposed; insomuch that the officer is convinced, that his commander, if he were acquainted with the true state in which the affair is found, would recall his orders; yet must this officer, if he cannot wait for fresh directions without prejudice to the expedition he is sent upon, pursue at all hazards, those which he brought out with him.

What is trusted to an agent, may be lost or damaged in his hands by *misfortune*. An agent who acts without pay, is clearly not answerable for the loss; for if he give his labour for nothing, it cannot be presumed that he gave also his security for the success of it. If the agent be hired to the business, the question will depend upon the apprehension of the parties at the time of making the contract; which apprehension of theirs must be collected chiefly from custom, by which probably it was guided. Whether a public carrier ought to account for goods sent by him; the owner or master of a ship for the cargo; the post-office, for letters, or bills enclosed in letters, where the loss is not imputed to any fault or neglect of theirs; are questions of this sort. Any expression which by implication amounts to a promise, will be binding upon the agent, without custom; as where the proprietors of a stage-coach advertise that they will *not* be accountable for money, plate or jewels, this makes them accountable for every thing else; or where the price is too much for the labour, part of it may be considered as a premium for insurance. On the other hand, any caution on the part of the owner to guard against danger, is evidence that he considers the risk to be his: as cutting a bank-bill in two, to send by the post at different times.

Universally, unless a *promise*, either express or tacit, can be proved against the agent, the loss must fall upon the owner.

The agent may be a sufferer in his own person or property by the business which he undertakes; as where one goes a journey for another, and lames his horse, or is hurt himself by a fall upon the road; can the agent in such a case claim a compensation for the misfortune? Unless the same be provided for by express stipulation, the agent is not entitled to any compensation from his employer on that account: for where the danger is not foreseen, there can be no reason to believe that the employer engaged to indemnify the agent against it: still less where it is foreseen: for whoever knowingly undertakes a dangerous

* Eph. vi. 5—9.

employment, in common construction, takes upon himself the danger and the consequences; as where a fireman undertakes for a reward to rescue a box of writing from the flames; or a sailor to bring off a passenger from a ship in a storm.

CHAPTER XIII.

Contracts of Labour.

PARTNERSHIP.

I know nothing upon the subject of partnership that requires explanation, but in what manner the profits are to be divided, where one partner contributes money, and the other labour; which is a common case.

Rule. From the stock of the partnership deduct the sum advanced, and divide the remainder between the monied partner and the labouring partner, in the proportion of the interest of the money to the wages of the labourer, allowing such a rate of interest as money might be borrowed for upon the same security, and such wages as a journeyman would require for the same labour and trust.

Example. A. advances a thousand pounds, but knows nothing of the business; B. produces no money, but has been brought up to the business, and undertakes to conduct it. At the end of the year, the stock and the effects of the partnership amount to twelve hundred pounds; consequently there are two hundred pounds to be divided.—Now, nobody would lend money upon the event of the business succeeding, which is A's security, under six per cent.;—therefore A. must be allowed sixty pounds for the interest of his money. B, before he engaged in the partnership, earned thirty pounds a year in the same employment; his labour, therefore, ought to be valued at thirty pounds: and the two hundred pounds must be divided between the partners in the proportion of sixty to thirty; that is, A. must receive one hundred and thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence, and B. sixty-six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence.

If there be nothing gained, A. loses his interest, and B. his labour; which is right. If the original stock be diminished, by this rule B. loses only his labour, as before; whereas A. loses his interest, and part of the principal; for which eventual disadvantage A. is compensated, by having the interest of his money computed at six per cent. in the division of the profits, when there are any.

It is true that the division of the profit is seldom forgotten in the constitution of the partnership, and is therefore commonly settled by express agreements: but these agreements, to be equitable, should pursue the principle of the rule here laid down.

All the partners are bound to what any one of them does in the course of the business; for, *quoad hoc*, each partner is considered as an authorised agent for the rest.

CHAPTER XIV.

Contracts of Labour.

OFFICES.

In many offices, as schools, fellowships of colleges, professorships of universities, and the like, there is a two-fold contract; one with the founder, the other with the electors.

The contract with the founder obliges the incumbent of the office to discharge every duty appointed by the charter, statutes, deed of gift, or will of the founder; because the endowment was given, and consequently accepted, for that purpose, and upon those conditions.

The contract with the electors extends this obligation to all duties that have been *customarily* connected with and reckoned a part of the office, though not prescribed by the founder; for the electors expect from the person they choose, all the duties which his predecessors have discharged; and as the person elected cannot be ignorant of their expectation, if he meant to have refused this condition, he ought to have apprised them of his objection.

And here let it be observed, that the electors can excuse the conscience of the person elected, from this last class of duties alone; because this class results from a contract to which the electors and the person elected are the only parties.—The other class of duties results from a different contract.

It is a question of some magnitude and difficulty, what offices may be conscientiously supplied by a deputy.

We will state the several objections to the substitution of a deputy; and then it will be understood, that a deputy may be allowed in all cases to which these objections do not apply.

An office may not be discharged by deputy,

1. Where a particular confidence is reposed in the judgment and conduct of the person appointed to it; as the office of a steward, guardian, judge, commander-in-chief by land or sea.

2. Where the custom hinders; as in the case of schoolmasters, tutors, and of commissions in the army or navy.

3. Where the duty cannot, from its nature, be so well performed by a deputy; as the deputy-governor of a province may not possess the legal authority, or the actual influence, of his principal.

4. When some inconveniency would result to the service in general from the permission of deputies in such cases: for example, it is probable that military merit would be much discouraged, if the duties belonging to commissions in the army were generally allowed to be executed by substitutes.

The non-residence of the parochial clergy, who supply the duty of their benefices by curates, is worthy of a more distinct consideration. And in order to draw the question upon this case to a point, we will suppose the officiating curate to discharge every duty which his principal, were he present, would be bound to discharge, and in a manner equally beneficial to the parish: under which circumstances, the only objection to the absence of the principal, at least the only one of the foregoing objections, is the last.

And, in my judgment, the force of this objection will be much diminished, if the absent rector or vicar be, in the meantime, engaged in any function or employment of equal, or of greater, importance to the general interest of religion. For the whole revenue of the national church may properly enough be considered as a common fund for the support of the national religion; and if a clergyman be serving the cause of christianity and protestantism, it can make little difference, out of

what particular portion of this fund, that is, by the tithes and glebe of what particular parish, his service be requited; any more than it can prejudice the king's service that an officer who has signalised his merit in America, should be rewarded with the government of a fort or castle in Ireland, which he never saw; but for the custody of which, proper provision is made, and care taken.

Upon the principle thus explained, this indulgence is due to none more than to those who are occupied in cultivating or communicating religious knowledge, or the sciences subsidiary to religion.

This way of considering the revenues of the church as a common fund for the same purpose, is the more equitable, as the value of particular preferments bears no proportion to the particular charge or labour.

But when a man draws upon this fund, whose studies and employments bear no relation to the object of it, and who is no further a minister of the christian religion than as a cockade makes a soldier, it seems a misapplication little better than a robbery.

And to those who have the management of such matters I submit this question, whether the impoverishment of the fund, by converting the best share of it into *annuities* for the gay and illiterate youth of great families, threatens not to starve and stifle the little clerical merit that is left amongst us?

All legal dispensations from residence, proceed upon the supposition, that the absentee is detained from his living by some engagement of equal or of greater public importance. Therefore, if, in a case where no such reason can with truth be pleaded, it be said that this question regards a right of property, and that all right of property awaits the disposition of law; that, therefore, if the law which gives a man the emoluments of a living, excuse him from residing upon it, he is excused in conscience; we answer that the law does not excuse him by *intention*, and that all other excuses are fraudulent.

CHAPTER XV.

Lies.

A LIE is a breach of promise: for whoever seriously addresses his discourse to another, tacitly promises to speak the truth, because he knows that the truth is expected.

Or the obligation of veracity may be made out from the direct ill consequences of lying to social happiness. Which consequences consist, either in some specific injury to particular individuals, or in the destruction of that confidence which is essential to the intercourse of human life; for which latter reason, a lie may be pernicious in its general tendency, and therefore criminal, though it produce no particular or visible mischief to any one.

There are falsehoods which are not lies; that is, which are not criminal: as,

1. Where no one is deceived; which is the case in parables, fables, novels, jests, tales to create mirth, ludicrous embellishments of a story, where the declared design of the speaker is not to inform, but to divert; compliments in the subscription of a letter, a servant's *denying* his master, a prisoner's pleading not guilty, an advocate asserting the justice, or his belief of the justice of his client's cause. In such instances, no confidence is destroyed, because none was reposed; no promise to speak the truth is violated, because none was given, or understood to be given.

2. Where the person to whom you speak has no right to know the truth, or, more properly, where little or no inconveniency results from the want of confidence in such cases; as where you tell a falsehood to a madman, for his own advantage; to a robber, to conceal your property; to an assassin, to defeat or divert him from his purpose. The particular consequence is by the supposition beneficial; and, as to the general consequence, the worst that can happen is, that the madman, the robber, the assassin, will not trust you again; which (beside that the first is incapable of deducing regular conclusions from having been once deceived, and the last two not likely to come a second time in your way) is sufficiently compensated by the immediate benefit which you propose by the falsehood.

It is upon this principle, that, by the laws of war, it is allowed to deceive an enemy by feints, false colours,* spies, false intelligence, and the like; but by no means in treaties, truces, signals of capitulation, or surrender: and the difference is, that the former suppose hostilities to continue, the latter are calculated to terminate or suspend them. In the conduct of war, and whilst the war continues, there is no use, or rather no place, for confidence betwixt the contending parties; but in whatever relates to the *termination* of war, the most religious fidelity is expected, because without it wars could not cease, nor the victims be secure, but by the entire destruction of the vanquished.

Many people indulge, in serious discourse, a habit of fiction and exaggeration, in the accounts they give of themselves, of their acquaintance, or of the extraordinary things which they have seen or heard: and so long as the facts they relate are indifferent, and their narratives, though false, are inoffensive, it may seem a superstitious regard to truth to censure them merely for truth's sake.

In the first place, it is almost impossible to pronounce beforehand, with certainty, concerning any lie, that it is inoffensive. *Volat irrevocabile;* and collects sometimes accretions in its flight, which entirely change its nature. It may owe possibly its mischief to the officiousness or misrepresentation of those who circulate it; but the mischief is, nevertheless, in some degree chargeable upon the original editor.

In the next place, this liberty in conversation defeats its own end. Much of the pleasure, and all the benefit, of conversation, depends upon our opinion of the speaker's veracity; for which this rule leaves no foundation. The faith indeed of a hearer must be extremely perplexed, who considers the speaker, or believes that the speaker considers himself as under no obligation to adhere

* There have been two or three instances of late, of English ships decoying an enemy into their power, by counterfeiting signals of distress; an artifice which ought to be reprobated by the common indignation of mankind! for a few examples of captures effected by this stratagem, would put an end to that promptitude in affording assistance to ships in distress, which is the best virtue in a seafaring character, and by which the perils of navigation are diminished to all.—A. D. 1775.

to truth, but according to the particular importance of what he relates.

But beside and above both these reasons, *white* lies always introduce others of a darker complexion. I have seldom known any one who deserted truth in trifles, that could be trusted in matters of importance. Nice distinctions are out of the question, upon occasions which, like those of speech, return every hour. The habit, therefore, of lying, when once formed, is easily extended, to serve the designs of malice or interest;—like all habits, it spreads indeed of itself.

Pious frauds, as they are improperly enough called, pretended inspirations, forged books, counterfeit miracles, are impositions of a more serious nature. It is possible that they may sometimes, though seldom, have been set up and encouraged, with a design to do good: but the good they aim at, requires that the belief of them should be perpetual, which is hardly possible; and the detection of the fraud is sure to disparage the credit of all pretensions of the same nature. Christianity has suffered more injury from this cause, than from all other causes put together.

As there may be falsehoods which are not lies, so there may be lies without literal or direct falsehood. An opening is always left for this species of prevarication, when the literal and grammatical signification of a sentence is different from the popular and customary meaning. It is the wilful deceit that makes the lie; and we wilfully deceive, when our expressions are not true in the sense in which we believe the hearer to apprehend them; besides that it is absurd to contend for any sense of words, in opposition to usage; for all senses of all words are founded upon usage, and upon nothing else.

Or a man may *act* a lie; as by pointing his finger in a wrong direction, when a traveller inquires of him his road; or when a tradesman shuts up his windows, to induce his creditors to believe that he is abroad: for, to all moral purposes, and therefore as to veracity, speech and action are the same; speech being only a mode of action.

Or, lastly, there may be lies of *omission*. A writer of English history, who in his account of the reign of Charles the First, should wilfully suppress any evidence of that prince's despotic measures and designs, might be said to lie; for, by entitling his book a *History of England*, he engages to relate the whole truth of the history, or, at least, all that he knows of it.

CHAPTER XVI.

Oaths.

I. *Forms of Oaths.*
II. *Signification.*
III. *Lawfulness.*
IV. *Obligation.*
V. *What Oaths do not bind.*
VI. *In what sense Oaths are to be interpreted.*

I. The forms of oaths, like other religious ceremonies, have in all ages been various; consisting however, for the most part, of some bodily action,* and of a prescribed form of words. Amongst the Jews, the juror held up his right hand towards heaven, which explains a passage in the 144th Psalm; "Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and *their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.*" The same form is retained in Scotland still. Amongst the same Jews, an oath of fidelity was taken, by the servant's putting his hand under the thigh of his lord, as Eliezer did to Abraham, Gen. xxiv. 2.; from whence, with no great variation, is derived perhaps the form of doing homage at this day, by putting the hands between the knees, and within the hands, of the liege.

Amongst the Greeks and Romans, the form varied with the subject and occasion of the oath. In private contracts, the parties took hold of each other's hand, whilst they swore to the performance; or they touched the altar of the god by whose divinity they swore. Upon more solemn occasions, it was the custom to slay a victim; and the beast being *struck* down with certain ceremonies and invocations, gave birth to the expressions τεμνειν ορκον, *ferire pactum;* and to our English phrase, translated from these, of "striking a bargain."

The forms of oaths in Christian countries are also very different; but in no country in the world, I believe, worse contrived, either to convey the meaning, or impress the obligation of an oath, than in our own. The juror with us, after repeating the promise or affirmation which the oath is intended to confirm, adds, "So help me God:" or more frequently the substance of the oath is repeated to the juror by the officer or magistrate who administers it, adding in the conclusion, "So help you God." The energy of the sentence resides in the particle *so; so*, that is, *hac lege*, upon condition of my speaking the truth, or performing this promise, and not otherwise, may God help me. The juror, whilst he hears or repeats the words of the oath, holds his right hand upon a Bible, or other book containing the four Gospels. The conclusion of the oath sometimes runs, "Ita me Deus adjuvet, et hæc sancta evangelia," or "So help me God, and the contents of this book;" which last clause forms a connexion between the words and action of the juror, that before was wanting. The juror then kisses the book: the kiss, however, seems rather an act of reverence to the contents of the book, (as, in the popish ritual, the priest kisses the Gospel before he reads it,) than any part of the oath.

This obscure and elliptical form, together with the levity and frequency with which it is administered, has brought about a general inadvertency to the obligation of oaths: which, both in a religious and political view, is much to be lamented: and it merits public consideration, whether the requiring of oaths on so many frivolous occasions, especially in the Customs, and in the qualification for petty offices, has any other effect, than to make them cheap in the minds of the people. A pound of tea cannot travel regularly from the ship to the consumer, without costing half a dozen oaths at the least; and the same security for the due discharge of their office, namely, that of an oath, is required from a churchwarden and an

* It is commonly thought that oaths are denominated *corporal* oaths from the bodily action which accompanies them, of laying the right hand upon a book containing the four Gospels. This opinion, however, appears to be a mistake; for the term is borrowed from the ancient usage of touching, on these occasions, the *corporale*, or cloth which covered the consecrated elements.

archbishop, from a petty constable and the chief justice of England. Let the law continue its own sanctions, if they be thought requisite; but let it spare the solemnity of an oath. And where, from the want of something better to depend upon, it is necessary to accept men's own word or own account, let it annex to prevarication penalties proportioned to the public mischief of the offence.

II. But whatever be the form of an oath, the *signification* is the same. It is "the calling upon God to witness, *i. e.* to take notice of, what we say;" and it is "invoking his vengeance, or renouncing his favour, if what we say be false, or what we promise be not performed."

III. Quakers and Moravians refuse to swear upon any occasion; founding their scruples concerning the *lawfulness* of oaths upon our Saviour's prohibition, Matt. v. 34. "I say unto you, Swear not at all."

The answer which we give to this objection cannot be understood, without first stating the whole passage; "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."

To reconcile with this passage of Scripture the practice of swearing, or of taking oaths, when required by law, the following observations must be attended to:

1. It does not appear that swearing "by heaven," "by the earth," "by Jerusalem," or "by their own head," was a form of swearing ever made use of amongst the Jews in judicial oaths: and consequently, it is not probable that they were judicial oaths, which Christ had in his mind when he mentioned those instances.

2. As to the seeming universality of the prohibition, "Swear not at all," the emphatic clause "not at all" is to be read in connexion with what follows; "not at all," *i. e.* neither "by the heaven," nor "by the earth," nor "by Jerusalem," nor "by thy head;" "*not at all*," does not mean upon no occasion, but, by none of these forms. Our Saviour's argument seems to suppose, that the people to whom he spake, made a distinction between swearing directly by the "name of God," and swearing by those inferior objects of veneration, "the heavens," "the earth," "Jerusalem," or "their own head." In opposition to which distinction, he tells them, that on account of the relation which these things bore to the Supreme Being, to swear by any of them, was in effect and substance to swear by *him*; "by heaven, for it is his throne; by the earth, for it is his footstool; by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King; by thy head, for it is *his* workmanship, not *thine*,—thou canst not make one hair white or black;" for which reason he says, "Swear *not at all*," that is, neither directly by God, nor indirectly by any thing related to him. This interpretation is greatly confirmed by a passage in the twenty-third chapter of the same Gospel, where a similar distinction, made by the Scribes and Pharisees, is replied to in the same manner.

3. Our Saviour himself being "adjured by the living God," to declare whether he was the Christ, the Son of God, or not, condescended to answer the high-priest, without making any objection to the oath (for such it was) upon which he examined him.—"*God is my witness*," says St. Paul to the Romans, "that without ceasing I make mention of you in my prayers:" and to the Corinthians still more strongly. "*I call God for a record upon my soul*, that to spare you, I came not as yet to Corinth." Both these expressions contain the nature of oaths. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the custom of swearing judicially, without any mark of censure or disapprobation; "Men verily swear by the greater: and an oath, for confirmation, is to them an end of all strife."

Upon the strength of these reasons, we explain our Saviour's words to relate, not to judicial oaths, but to the practice of vain, wanton, and unauthorised swearing, in common discourse. St. James's words, chap. v. 12. are not so strong as our Saviour's, and therefore admit the same explanation with more ease.

IV. Oaths are nugatory, that is, carry with them no *proper* force or obligation, unless we believe that God will punish false swearing with more severity than a simple lie, or breach of promise; for which belief there are the following reasons:

1. Perjury is a sin of greater deliberation. The juror has the thought of God and of religion upon his mind at the time; at least there are very few who can shake them off entirely. He offends, therefore, if he do offend, with a high hand; in the face, that is, and in defiance of the sanctions of religion. His offence implies a disbelief or contempt of God's knowledge, power, and justice; which cannot be said of a lie, where there is nothing to carry the mind to any reflection upon the Deity, or the Divine Attributes at all.

2. Perjury violates a superior confidence.—Mankind must trust to one another: and they have nothing better to trust to than one another's oath. Hence legal adjudications, which govern and affect every right and interest on this side of the grave, of necessity proceed and depend upon oaths. Perjury, therefore, in its general consequence strikes at the security of reputation, property, and even of life itself. A lie cannot do the same mischief, because the same credit is not given to it.*

3. God directed the Israelites to swear by his name;† and was pleased, "in order to show the immutability of his own counsel,"‡ to confirm his covenant with that people by an oath: neither of which it is probable he would have done, had he not intended to represent oaths as having some meaning and effect beyond the obligation of a bare promise; which effect must be owing to the severer punishment with which he will vindicate the authority of oaths.

V. Promissory oaths are *not binding* where the promise itself would not be so: for the several cases of which, see the Chapter of Promises.

VI. As oaths are designed for the security of the imposer, it is manifest that they must be *interpreted* and performed in the sense in which the imposer intends them; otherwise, they afford no

* Except, indeed, where a Quaker's or Moravian's affirmation is accepted in the place of an oath; in which case, a lie partakes, so far as this reason extends, of the nature and guilt of perjury.

† Deut. v. 13. x. 20. ‡ Heb. vi. 17.

security to *him*. And this is the meaning and reason of the rule, "jurare in animum imponentis;" which rule the reader is desired to carry along with him, whilst we proceed to consider certain particular oaths, which are either of greater importance, or more likely to fall in our way, than others.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oath in Evidence.

The witness swears "to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, touching the matter in question."

Upon which it may be observed, that the designed concealment of any truth, which relates to the matter in agitation, is as much a violation of the oath, as to testify a positive falsehood; and this, whether the witness be interrogated as to that particular point or not. For when the person to be examined is sworn upon a *voir dire*, that is, in order to inquire whether he ought to be admitted to give evidence in the cause at all, the form runs thus: "You shall true answer make to all such questions as shall be asked you:" but when he comes to be sworn *in chief*, he swears "to speak the whole truth," without restraining it, as before, to the questions that shall be asked: which difference shows, that the law intends, in this latter case, to require of the witness, that he give a complete and unreserved account of what he knows of the subject of the trial, whether the questions proposed to him reach the extent of his knowledge or not. So that if it be inquired of the witness afterwards, why he did not inform the court so and so, it is not a sufficient, though a very common answer, to say, "because it was never asked me."

I know but one exception to this rule; which is, when a full discovery of the truth tends to accuse the witness himself of some legal crime.—The law of England constrains no man to become his own accuser; consequently imposes the oath of testimony with this tacit reservation. But the exception must be confined to *legal* crimes. A point of honour, of delicacy, or of reputation, may make a witness backward to disclose some circumstance with which he is acquainted; but will in no wise justify his concealment of the truth, unless it could be shown, that the law which imposes the oath, intended to allow this indulgence to such motives. The exception of which we are speaking, is also withdrawn by a compact between the magistrate and the witness, when an accomplice is admitted to give evidence against the partners of his crime.

Tenderness to the prisoner, although a specious apology for concealment, is no just excuse: for if this plea be thought sufficient, it takes the administration of penal justice out of the hands of judges and juries, and makes it depend upon the temper of prosecutors and witnesses.

Questions may be asked, which are irrelative to the cause, which affect the witness himself, or some third person; in which, and in all cases where the witness doubts of the pertinency and propriety of the question, he ought to refer his doubts to the court. The answer of the court, in relaxation of the oath, is authority enough to the witness; for the law which imposes the oath, may remit what it will of the obligation: and it belongs to the court to declare what the mind of the law is. Nevertheless, it cannot be said universally, that the answer of the court is conclusive upon the conscience of the witness; for his obligation, depends upon what he apprehended, at the time of taking the oath, to be the design of the law in imposing it, and no after-requisition or explanation by the court can carry the obligation beyond that.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Oath of Allegiance.

"I do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful, and bear true *allegiance* to his Majesty King George." Formerly the oath of allegiance ran thus: "I do promise to be true and faithful, to the king and his heirs, and truth and faith to bear, of life, and limb, and terrene honour; and not to know or hear of any ill or damage intended him, without defending him therefrom:" and was altered at the Revolution to the present form. So that the present oath is a relaxation of the old one. And as the oath was intended to ascertain, not so much the extent of the subject's obedience, as the person to whom it was due, the legislature seems to have wrapped up its meaning upon the former point, in a word purposely made choice of for its general and indeterminate signification.

It will be most convenient to consider, first, what the oath excludes as inconsistent with it; secondly, what it permits.

1. The oath excludes all intention to support the claim or pretensions of any other person or persons to the crown and government, than the reigning sovereign. A jacobite, who is persuaded of the Pretender's right to the crown, and who moreover designs to join with the adherents to that cause to assert this right, whenever a proper opportunity, with a reasonable prospect of success, presents itself, cannot take the oath of allegiance; or, if he could, the oath of abjuration follows, which contains an express renunciation of all opinions in favour of the claim of the exiled family.

2. The oath excludes all design, at the time, of attempting to depose the reigning prince, for any reason whatever. Let the justice of the Revolution be what it would, no honest man could have taken even the present oath of allegiance to James the Second, who entertained, at the time of taking it, a design of joining in the measures which were entered into to dethrone him.

3. The oath forbids the taking up of arms against the reigning prince, with views of private advancement, or from motives of personal resentment or dislike. It is possible to happen in this, what frequently happens in despotic governments, that an ambitious general, at the head of the military force of the nation, might, by a conjuncture of fortunate circumstances, and a great ascendency over the minds of the soldiery, depose the prince upon the throne, and make way to it for himself, or for some creature of his own. A person in this situation would be withholden from such an attempt by the oath of allegiance, if he paid regard to it. If there were any who engaged in the rebellion of the year forty-five, with the expectation of titles, estates, or preferment; or because they

were disappointed, and thought themselves neglected and ill-used at court; or because they entertained a family animosity, or personal resentment, against the king, the favourite, or the minister;—if any were induced to take up arms by these motives, they added to the many crimes of an unprovoked rebellion, that of wilful and corrupt perjury. If, in the late American war, the same motives determined others to connect themselves with that opposition, their part in it was chargeable with perfidy and falsehood to their oath, whatever was the justice of the opposition itself, or however well-founded their own complaints might be of private injury.

We are next to consider what the oath of allegiance permits, or does not require.

1. It permits resistance to the king, when his ill behaviour or imbecility is such, as to make resistance beneficial to the community. It may fairly be presumed that the Convention Parliament, which introduced the oath in its present form, did not intend, by imposing it, to exclude all resistance, since the members of that legislature had, many of them, recently taken up arms against James the Second, and the very authority by which they sat together was itself the effect of a successful opposition to an acknowledged sovereign. Some resistance, therefore, was meant to be allowed; and, if any, it must be that which has the public interest for its object.

2. The oath does not require obedience to such commands of the king as are unauthorized by law. No such obedience is implied by the terms of the oath; the *fidelity* there promised, is intended of fidelity in opposition to his enemies, and not in opposition to law; and *allegiance*, at the utmost, can only signify obedience to lawful commands. Therefore, if the king should issue a proclamation, levying money, or imposing any service or restraint upon the subject beyond what the crown is empowered by law to enjoin, there would exist no sort of obligation to obey such a proclamation, in consequence of having taken the oath of allegiance.

3. The oath does not require that we should continue our allegiance to the king, after he is actually and absolutely deposed, driven into exile, carried away captive, or otherwise rendered incapable of exercising the regal office, whether by his fault or without it. The promise of allegiance implies, and is understood by all parties to suppose, that the person to whom the promise is made, continues king; continues, that is, to exercise the power, and afford the protection which belongs to the office of king: for, it is the possession of this power, which makes such a particular person the object of the oath; without it, why should I swear allegiance to this man, rather than to any man in the kingdom? Beside which, the contrary doctrine is burthened with this consequence, that every conquest, revolution of government, or disaster which befals the person of the prince, must be followed by perpetual and irremediable anarchy.

CHAPTER XIX.

Oath against Bribery in the Election of Members of Parliament.

"I DO swear, I have not received, or had, I myself, or any person whatsoever, in trust for me, or for my use and benefit, directly or indirectly, any sum or sums of money, office, place, or employment, gift or reward, or any promise or security, for any money, office, employment, or gift, in order to give my vote at this election."

The several contrivances to evade this oath, such as the electors accepting money under colour of borrowing it, and giving a promissory note, or other security, for it, which is cancelled after the election; receiving money from a stranger, or a person in disguise, or out of a drawer, or purse, left open for the purpose; or promises of money to be paid after the election; or stipulating for a place, living, or other private advantage of any kind; if they escape the legal penalties of perjury, incur the moral guilt; for they are manifestly within the mischief and design of the statute which imposes the oath, and within the terms indeed of the oath itself; for the word "indirectly" is inserted on purpose to comprehend such cases as these.

CHAPTER XX.

Oath against Simony.

FROM an imaginary resemblance between the purchase of a benefice, and Simon Magus's attempt to purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost, (Acts viii. 19,) the obtaining of ecclesiastical preferment by pecuniary considerations has been termed *Simony*.

The sale of advowsons is inseparable from the allowance of private patronage; as patronage would otherwise devolve to the most indigent, and for that reason the most improper hands it could be placed in. Nor did the law ever intend to prohibit the passing of advowsons from one patron to another; but to restrain the patron, who possesses the right of presenting at the vacancy, from being influenced, in the choice of his presentee, by a bribe, or benefit to himself. It is the same distinction with that which obtains in a freeholder's vote for his representative in parliament. The right of voting, that is, the freehold to which the right pertains, may be bought and sold as freely as any other property; but the exercise of that right, the vote itself, may not be purchased, or influenced by money.

For this purpose, the law imposes upon the presentee, who is generally concerned in the simony, if there be any, the following oath: "I do swear, that I have made no *simoniacal* payment, contract, or promise, directly or indirectly, by myself, or by any other to my knowledge, or with my consent, to any person or persons whatsoever, for or concerning the procuring and obtaining of this ecclesiastical place, &c.; nor will, at any time hereafter, perform, or satisfy, any such kind of payment, contract, or promise, made by any other without my knowledge or consent: so help me God, through Jesus Christ!"

It is extraordinary that Bishop Gibson should have thought this oath to be against all promises whatsoever, when the terms of the oath expressly restrain it to *simoniacal* promises; and the law alone must pronounce what promises, as well as what payments and contracts, are simoniacal, and consequently come within the oath; and what do not so.

Now the law adjudges to be simony,

1. All payments, contracts, or promises, made by any person for a benefice *already vacant*. The advowson of a void turn, by law, cannot be transferred from one patron to another; therefore, if the void turn be procured by money, it must be by a pecuniary influence upon the then subsisting patron in the choice of his presentee, which is the very practice the law condemns.

2. A clergyman's purchasing of the *next turn* for a benefice *for himself*, "directly or indirectly," that is, by himself, or by another person with his money. It does not appear that the law prohibits a clergyman from purchasing the perpetuity of a patronage, more than any other person: but purchasing the perpetuity, and forthwith selling it again with the reservation of the next turn, and with no other design than to possess himself of the next turn, is *in fraudem legis*, and inconsistent with the oath.

3. The procuring of a piece of preferment, by ceding to the patron any rights, or probable rights, belonging to it. This is simony of the worst kind; for it is not only buying preferment, but robbing the succession to pay for it.

4. Promises to the patron of a portion of the profit, of a remission of tithes and dues, or other advantage out of the produce of the benefice; which kind of compact is a pernicious condescension in the clergy, independent of the oath; for it tends to introduce a practice, which may very soon become general, of giving the revenue of churches to the lay patrons, and supplying the duty by indigent stipendiaries.

5. General bonds of resignation, that is, bonds to resign upon demand.

I doubt not but that the oath against simony is binding upon the consciences of those who take it, though I question much the expediency of requiring it. It is very fit to debar public patrons, such as the king, the lord chancellor, bishops, ecclesiastical corporations, and the like, from this kind of traffic: because from them may be expected some regard to the qualifications of the persons whom they promote. But the oath lays a snare for the integrity of the clergy; and I do not perceive, that the requiring of it in cases of private patronage, produces any good effect sufficient to compensate for this danger.

Where advowsons are holden along with manors, or other principal estates, it would be an easy regulation to forbid that they should ever hereafter be separated; and would, at least, keep church-preferment out of the hands of brokers.

CHAPTER XXI.

Oaths to Observe Local Statutes.

Members of colleges in the Universities, and of other ancient foundations, are required to swear to the observance of their respective statutes; which observance is become in some cases unlawful, in others impracticable, in others useless, in others inconvenient.

Unlawful directions are countermanded by the authority which made them unlawful.

Impracticable directions are dispensed with by the necessity of the case.

The only question is, how far the members of these societies may take upon themselves to judge of the *inconveniency* of any particular direction, and make that a reason for laying aside the observation of it.

The *animus imponentis*, which is the measure of the juror's duty, seems to be satisfied, when nothing is omitted, but what, from some change in the circumstances under which it was prescribed, it may fairly be presumed that the founder himself would have dispensed with.

To bring a case within this rule, the *inconveniency* must—

1. Be manifest; concerning which there is no doubt.

2. It must arise from some change in the circumstances of the institution: for, let the inconveniency be what it will, if it existed at the time of the foundation, it must be presumed that the founder did not deem the avoiding of it of sufficient importance to alter his plan.

3. The direction of the statute must not only be inconvenient in the general (for so may the institution itself be,) but prejudicial to the particular end proposed by the institution: for, it is this last circumstance which proves that the founder would have dispensed with it in pursuance of his own purpose.

The statutes of some colleges forbid the speaking of any language but Latin, within the walls of the college; direct that a certain number, and not fewer than that number, be allowed the use of an apartment amongst them; that so many hours of each day be employed in public exercises, lectures, or disputations; and some other articles of discipline adapted to the tender years of the students who in former times resorted to universities. Were colleges to retain such rules, nobody now-a-days would come near them. They are laid aside therefore, though parts of the statutes, and as such included within the oath, not merely because they are inconvenient, but because there is sufficient reason to believe, that the founders themselves would have dispensed with them, as subversive of their own designs.

CHAPTER XXII.

Subscription to Articles of Religion.

Subscription to articles of religion, though no more than a *declaration* of the subscriber's assent, may properly enough be considered in connexion with the subject of oaths, because it is governed by the same rule of interpretation:

Which rule is the *animus imponentis*.

The inquiry, therefore, concerning subscription, will be, *quis imposuit, et quo animo?*

The bishop who receives the subscription, is not the imposer, any more than the crier of a court, who administers the oath to the jury and witnesses, is the person that imposes it; nor, consequently, is the private opinion or interpretation of the bishop of any signification to the subscriber one way or other.

The compilers of the Thirty-nine Articles are not to be considered as the imposers of subscription, any more than the framer or drawer up of a law is the person that enacts it.

The legislature of the 13th Eliz. is the imposer, whose intention the subscriber is bound to satisfy.

They who contend, that nothing less can justify subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, than

the actual belief of each and every separate proposition contained in them, must suppose, that the legislature expected the consent of ten thousand men, and that in perpetual succession, not to one controverted proposition, but to many hundreds. It is difficult to conceive how this could be expected by any, who observed the incurable diversity of human opinion upon all subjects short of demonstration.

If the authors of the law did not intend this, what did they intend?

They intended to exclude from offices in the church,

1. All abettors of popery:

2. Anabaptists; who were at that time a powerful party on the Continent.

3. The puritans; who were hostile to an episcopal constitution: and in general the members of such leading sects or foreign establishments as threatened to overthrow our own.

Whoever finds himself comprehended within these descriptions, ought not to subscribe. Nor can a subscriber to the Articles take advantage of any latitude which our rule may seem to allow, who is not first convinced that he is truly and substantially satisfying the intention of the legislature.

During the present state of ecclesiastical patronage, in which private individuals are permitted to impose teachers upon parishes with which they are often little or not at all connected, some limitation of the patron's choice may be necessary to prevent unedifying contentions between neighbouring teachers, or between the teachers, and their respective congregations. But this danger, if it exist, may be provided against with equal effect, by converting the articles of faith into articles of peace.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Wills.

The fundamental question upon this subject is, whether Wills are of natural or of adventitious right? that is, whether the right of directing the disposition of property after his death belongs to a man in a state of nature, and by the law of nature, or whether it be given him entirely by the positive regulations of the country he lives in?

The immediate produce of each man's personal labour, as the tools, weapons, and utensils, which he manufactures, the tent or hut that he builds, and perhaps the flocks and herds which he breeds and rears, are as much his own as the labour was which he employed upon them; that is, are his property naturally and absolutely; and consequently he may give or leave them to whom he pleases, there being nothing to limit the continuance of his right, or to restrain the alienation of it.

But every other species of property, especially property in land, stands upon a different foundation.

We have seen, in the Chapter upon Property, that, in a state of nature, a man's right to a particular spot of ground arises from his using it and his wanting it; consequently ceases with the use and want: so that at his death the estate reverts to the community, without any regard to the last owner's will, or even any preference of his family, further than as they become the first occupiers after him, and succeed to the same want and use.

Moreover, as natural rights cannot, like rights created by act of parliament, expire at the end of a certain number of years; if the testator have a right, by the law of nature, to dispose of his property one moment after his death, he has the same right to direct the disposition of it for a million of ages after him; which is absurd.

The ancient apprehensions of mankind upon the subject were conformable to this account of it: for, wills have been introduced into most countries by a positive act of the state; as by the Laws of Solon into Greece; by the Twelve Tables into Rome; and that not till after a considerable progress had been made in legislation, and in the economy of civil life. Tacitus relates, that amongst the Germans they were disallowed; and what is more remarkable, in this country, since the Conquest, lands could not be devised by will, till within little more than two hundred years ago, when this privilege was restored to the subject, by an act of parliament, in the latter end of the reign of Henry the Eighth.

No doubt, many beneficial purposes are attained by extending the owner's power over his property beyond his life, and beyond his natural right. It invites to industry; it encourages marriage; it secures the dutifulness and dependency of children: but a limit must be assigned to the duration of this power. The utmost extent to which, in any case, entails are allowed by the laws of England to operate, is during the lives in existence at the death of the testator, and one-and-twenty years beyond these; after which, there are ways and means of setting them aside.

From the consideration that wills are the creatures of the municipal law which gives them their efficacy, may be deduced a determination of the question, whether the intention of the testator in an *informal* will, be binding upon the conscience of those, who, by operation of law, succeed to his estate. By an *informal* will, I mean a will void in law for want of some requisite formality, though no doubt be entertained of its meaning or authenticity: as, suppose a man make his will, devising his freehold estate to his sister's son, and the will be attested by two only, instead of three, subscribing witnesses; would the brother's son, who is heir at law to the testator, be bound in conscience to resign his claim to the estate, out of deference to his uncle's intention? or, on the contrary, would not the devisee under the will be bound, upon discovery of this flaw in it, to surrender the estate, suppose he had gained possession of it, to the heir at law?

Generally speaking, the heir at law is not bound by the intention of the testator: for the intention can signify nothing, unless the person intending have a right to govern the descent of the estate. That is the first question. Now this right the testator can only derive from the law of the land: but the law confers the right upon certain conditions, with which conditions he has not complied; therefore, the testator can lay no claim to the power which he pretends to exercise, as he hath not entitled himself to the benefit of that law, by virtue of which alone the estate ought to attend his disposal. Consequently, the devisee under the will, who, by concealing this flaw in it, keeps possession of the estate, is in the situation of any other person who avails himself of his

neighbour's ignorance to detain from him his property. The will is so much waste paper, from the defect of right in the person who made it. Nor is this catching at an expression of law to pervert the substantial design of it: for I apprehend it to be the deliberate mind of the legislature, that no will should take effect upon real estates, unless authenticated in the precise manner which the statute describes. Had testamentary dispositions been founded in any natural right, independent of positive constitutions I should have thought differently of this question: for then I should have considered the law rather as refusing its assistance to enforce the right of the devisee, than as extinguishing or working any alteration in the right itself.

And after all, I should choose to propose a case, where no consideration of pity to distress, of duty to a parent, or of gratitude to a benefactor, interfered with the general rule of justice.

The regard due to kindred in the disposal of our fortune (except the case of lineal kindred, which is different) arises either from the respect we owe to the presumed intention of the ancestor from whom we received our fortunes, or from the expectations which we have encouraged. The intention of the ancestor is presumed with greater certainty, as well as entitled to more respect, the fewer degrees he is removed from us; which makes the difference in the different degrees of kindred. For instance, it may be presumed to be a father's intention and desire, that the inheritance which he leaves, after it has served the turn and generation of one son, should remain a provision for the families of his other children, equally related and dear to him as the oldest. Whoever, therefore, without cause, gives away his patrimony from his brother's or sister's family, is guilty not so much of an injury to them, as of ingratitude to his parent. The deference due from the possessor of a fortune to the presumed desire of his ancestor, will also vary with this circumstance: whether the ancestor earned the fortune by his personal industry, acquired it by accidental successes, or only transmitted the inheritance which he received.

Where a man's fortune is acquired by himself, and he has done nothing to excite expectation, but rather has refrained from those particular attentions which tend to cherish expectation, he is perfectly disengaged from the force of the above reasons, and at liberty to leave his fortune to his friends, to charitable or public purposes, or to whom he will: the same blood, proximity of blood, and the like, are merely modes of speech, implying nothing real, nor any obligation of themselves.

There is always, however, a reason for providing for our poor relations, in preference to others who may be equally necessitous, which is, that if we do not, no one else will; mankind, by an established consent, leaving the reduced branches of good families to the bounty of their wealthy alliances.

The not making a will, is a very culpable omission, where it is attended with the following effects: where it leaves daughters, or younger children, at the mercy of the oldest son; where it distributes a personal fortune equally amongst the children, although there be no equality in their exigences or situations; where it leaves an opening for litigation; or lastly, and principally, where it defrauds creditors; for, by a defect in our laws, which has been long and strangely overlooked, real estates are not subject to the payment of debts by simple contract, unless made so by will; although credit is, in fact, generally given to the possession of such estates: he, therefore, who neglects to make the necessary appointments for the payment of his debts, as far as his effects extend, sins, as it has been justly said, in his grave; and if he omits this on purpose to defeat the demands of his creditors, he dies with a deliberate fraud in his heart.

Anciently, when any one died without a will, the bishop of the diocese took possession of his personal fortune, in order to dispose of it for the benefit of his soul, that is, to pious or charitable uses. It became necessary, therefore, that the bishop should be satisfied of the authenticity of the will, when there was any, before he resigned the right which he had to take possession of the dead man's fortune in case of intestacy. In this way wills and controversies relating to wills, came within the cognizance of ecclesiastical courts; under the jurisdiction of which, wills of personals (the only wills that were made formerly) still continue, though in truth, no more now-a-days connected with religion, than any other instruments of conveyance. This is a peculiarity in the English laws.

Succession to *intestates* must be regulated by positive rules of law, there being no principle of natural justice whereby to ascertain the proportion of the different claimants: not to mention that the claim itself, especially of collateral kindred, seems to have little foundation in the laws of nature.

These regulations should be guided by the duty and presumed inclination of the deceased, so far as these considerations can be consulted by general rules. The statutes of Charles the Second, commonly called the Statutes of Distribution, which adopt the rules of the Roman law in the distribution of personals, are sufficiently equitable. They assign one-third to the widow, and two-thirds to the children; in case of no children, one half to the widow, and the other half to the next of kin; where neither widow nor lineal descendants survive, the whole to the next of kin, and to be equally divided amongst kindred of equal degree, without distinction of whole blood and half blood, or of consanguinity by the father's or mother's side.

The descent of real estates, of houses, that is, and land, having been settled in more remote and in ruder times, is less reasonable. There never can be much to complain of in a rule which every person may avoid, by so easy a provision as that of making his will: otherwise, our law in this respect is chargeable with some flagrant absurdities; such as, that an estate shall in no wise go to the brother or sister of the half blood, though it came to the deceased from the common parent; that it shall go to the remotest relation the intestate has in the world, rather than to his own father or mother; or even be forfeited for want of an heir, though both parents survive; that the most distant paternal relation shall be preferred to an uncle, or own cousin, by the mother's side, notwithstanding the estate was purchased and acquired by the intestate himself.

Land not being so divisible as money, may be a reason for making a difference in the course of

inheritance: but there ought to be no difference but what is founded upon that reason. The Roman law made none.

BOOK III.

PART II.

OF RELATIVE DUTIES WHICH ARE INDETERMINATE.

CHAPTER I.

Charity.

I USE the term Charity neither in the common sense of bounty to the poor, nor in St. Paul's sense of benevolence to all mankind: but I apply it at present, in a sense more commodious to my purpose, to signify *the promoting the happiness of our inferiors.*

Charity, in this sense, I take to be the principal province of virtue and religion: for, whilst worldly prudence will direct our behaviour towards our superiors, and politeness towards our equals, there is little beside the consideration of duty, or an habitual humanity which comes into the place of consideration, to produce a proper conduct towards those who are beneath us, and dependant upon us.

There are three principal methods of promoting the happiness of our inferiors.

1. By the treatment of our domestics and dependants.
2. By professional assistance.
3. By pecuniary bounty.

CHAPTER II.

Charity.

THE TREATMENT OF OUR DOMESTICS AND DEPENDANTS.

A PARTY of friends setting out together upon a journey, soon find it to be the best for all sides, that while they are upon the road, one of the company should wait upon the rest; another ride forward to seek out lodging and entertainment; a third carry the portmanteau; a fourth take charge of the horses; a fifth bear the purse, conduct and direct the route; not forgetting, however, that, as they were equal and independent when they set out, so they are all to return to a level again at their journey's end. The same regard and respect; the same forbearance, lenity, and reserve in using their service; the same mildness in delivering commands; the same study to make their journey comfortable and pleasant, which he whose lot it was to direct the rest, would in common decency think himself bound to observe towards them; ought we to show to those who, in the casting of the parts of human society, happen to be placed within our power, or to depend upon us.

Another reflection of a like tendency with the former is, that our obligation to them is much greater than theirs to us. It is a mistake to suppose, that the rich man maintains his servants, tradesmen, tenants, and labourers: the truth is, they maintain him. It is their industry which supplies his table, furnishes his wardrobe, builds his houses, adorns his equipage, provides his amusements. It is not the estate, but the labour employed upon it, that pays his rent. All that he does, is to distribute what others produce; which is the least part of the business.

Nor do I perceive any foundation for an opinion, which is often handed round in genteel company, that good usage is thrown away upon low and ordinary minds; that they are insensible of kindness, and incapable of gratitude. If by "low and ordinary minds" are meant the minds of men in low and ordinary stations, they seem to be affected by benefits in the same way that all others are, and to be no less ready to requite them: and it would be a very unaccountable law of nature if it were otherwise.

Whatever uneasiness we occasion to our domestics, which neither promotes our service, nor answers the just ends of punishment, is manifestly wrong; were it only upon the general principle of diminishing the sum of human happiness.

By which rule we are forbidden,

1. To enjoin unnecessary labour or confinement from the mere love and wantonness of domination.
2. To insult our servants by harsh, scornful, or opprobrious language.
3. To refuse them any harmless pleasures.

And, by the same principle, are also forbidden causeless or immoderate anger, habitual peevishness, and groundless suspicion.

CHAPTER III.

Slavery.

THE prohibitions of the last chapter extend to the treatment of slaves, being founded upon a principle independent of the contract between masters and servants.

I define slavery to be "an obligation to labour for the benefit of the master, without the contract or consent of the servant."

This obligation may arise, consistently with the law of nature, from three causes:

1. From crimes.
2. From captivity.
3. From debt.

In the first case, the continuance of the slavery, as of any other punishment, ought to be proportioned to the crime; in the second and third cases, it ought to cease, as soon as the demand of the injured nation, or private creditor, is satisfied.

The slave-trade upon the coast of Africa is not excused by these principles. When slaves in that country are brought to market, no questions, I believe, are asked about the origin or justice of the vendor's title. It may be presumed, therefore, that this title is not always, if it be ever, founded in any of the causes above assigned.

But defect of right in the first purchase, is the least crime with which this traffic is chargeable. The natives are excited to war and mutual depredation, for the sake of supplying their contracts, or furnishing the market with slaves. With this

the wickedness begins. The slaves, torn away from parents, wives, children, from their friends and companions, their fields and flocks, their home and country, are transported to the European settlements in America, with no other accommodation on shipboard than what is provided for brutes. This is the second stage of cruelty; from which the miserable exiles are delivered, only to be placed, and that for life, in subjection to a dominion and system of laws, the most merciless and tyrannical that ever were tolerated upon the face of the earth; and from all that can be learned by the accounts of the people upon the spot, the inordinate authority which the plantation-laws confer upon the slave-holder is exercised, by the *English* slave-holder especially, with rigour and brutality.

But *necessity* is pretended; the name under which every enormity is attempted to be justified. And, after all, what is the necessity? It has never been proved that the land could not be cultivated there, as it is here, by hired servants. It is said that it could not be cultivated with quite the same conveniency and cheapness, as by the labour of slaves: by which means, a pound of sugar, which the planter now sells for sixpence, could not be afforded under sixpence-halfpenny;—and this is the *necessity*.

The great revolution which has taken place in the Western world, may probably conduce (and who knows but that it was designed?) to accelerate the fall of this abominable tyranny: and now that this contest, and the passions which attend it, are no more, there may succeed perhaps a season for reflecting, whether a legislature which had so long lent its assistance to the support of an institution replete with human misery, was fit to be trusted with an empire the most extensive that ever obtained in any age or quarter of the world.

Slavery was a part of the civil constitution of most countries, when Christianity appeared; yet no passage is to be found in the Christian Scriptures, by which it is condemned or prohibited. This is true; for Christianity, soliciting admission into all nations of the world, abstained, as behoved it, from intermeddling with the civil institutions of any. But does it follow, from the silence of Scripture concerning them, that all the civil institutions which then prevailed were right? or that the bad should not be exchanged for better?

Besides this, the discharging of slaves from all obligation to obey their masters, which is the consequence of pronouncing slavery to be unlawful, would have had no better effect than to let loose one half of mankind upon the other. Slaves would have been tempted to embrace a religion, which asserted their right to freedom: masters would hardly have been persuaded to consent to claims founded upon such authority; the most calamitous of all contests, a *bellum servile*, might probably have ensued, to the reproach, if not the extinction, of the Christian name.

The truth is, the emancipation of slaves should be gradual and be carried on by provisions of law, and under the protection of civil government. Christianity can only operate as an alterative. By the mild diffusion of its light and influence, the minds of men are insensibly prepared to perceive and correct the enormities, which folly, or wickedness, or accident, have introduced into their public establishments. In this way the Greek and Roman slavery, and since these, the feudal tyranny, has declined before it. And we trust that, as the knowledge and authority of the same religion advance in the world, they will banish what remains of this odious institution.

CHAPTER IV.

Charity.

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE.

THIS kind of beneficence is chiefly to be expected from members of the legislature, magistrates, medical, legal, and sacerdotal professions.

1. The care of the poor ought to be the principal object of all laws; for this plain reason, that the rich are able to take care of themselves.

Much has been, and more might be, done by the laws of this country, towards the relief of the impotent, and the protection and encouragement of the industrious poor. Whoever applies himself to collect observations upon the state and operation of the poor laws, and to contrive remedies for the imperfections and abuses which he observes, and digests these remedies into acts of parliament; and conducts them, by argument or influence, through the two branches of the legislature, or communicates his ideas to those who are more likely to carry them into effect, deserves well of a class of the community so numerous, that their happiness forms a principal part of the whole. The study and activity thus employed, is charity, in the most meritorious sense of the word.

2. The application of parochial relief is intrusted, in the first instance, to overseers and contractors, who have an interest in opposition to that of the poor, inasmuch as whatever they allow them comes in part out of their own pocket. For this reason, the law has deposited with justices of the peace a power of superintendence and control; and the judicious interposition of this power is a most useful exertion of charity, and oft-times within the ability of those who have no other way of serving their generation. A country gentleman of very moderate education, and who has little to spare from his fortune, by learning so much of the poor-law as is to be found in Dr. Burn's Justice, and by furnishing himself with a knowledge of the prices of labour and provision, so as to be able to estimate the exigencies of a family, and what is to be expected from their industry, may, in this way, place out the one talent committed to him, to great account.

3. Of all private professions, that of medicine puts it in a man's power to do the most good at the least expense. Health, which is precious to all, is to the poor invaluable: and their complaints, as agues, rheumatisms, &c. are often such as yield to medicine. And, with respect to the expense, drugs at first hand cost little, and advice costs nothing, where it is only bestowed upon those who could not afford to pay for it.

4. The rights of the poor are not so important or intricate, as their contentions are violent and ruinous. A lawyer or attorney, of tolerable knowledge in his profession, has commonly judgment enough to adjust these disputes, with all the effect, and without the expense, of a law-suit; and he may be said to *give* a poor man twenty pounds

who prevents his throwing it away upon law. A *legal* man, whether of the profession or not, who, together with a spirit of conciliation, possesses the confidence of his neighbourhood, will be much resorted to for this purpose, especially since the great increase of costs has produced a general dread of going to law.

Nor is this line of beneficence confined to *arbitration*. Seasonable counsel, coming with the weight which the reputation of the adviser gives it, will often keep or extricate the rash and uninformed out of great difficulties.

Lastly, I know not a more exalted charity than that which presents a shield against the rapacity or persecution of a tyrant.

5. Betwixt argument and authority (I mean that authority which flows from voluntary respect, and attends upon sanctity and disinterestedness of character) something may be done, amongst the lower orders of mankind, towards the regulation of their conduct, and the satisfaction of their thoughts. This office belongs to the ministers of religion; or rather, whoever undertakes it, becomes a minister of religion. The inferior clergy, who are nearly upon a level with the common sort of their parishioners, and who on that account gain an easier admission to their society and confidence, have in this respect more in their power than their superiors: the discreet use of this power constitutes one of the most respectable functions of human nature.

CHAPTER V.

Charity.

PECUNIARY BOUNTY.

I. *The obligation to bestow relief upon the poor.*
II. *The manner of bestowing it.*
III. *The pretences by which men excuse themselves from it.*

I. *The obligation to bestow relief upon the poor.*

They who rank pity amongst the original impulses of our nature, rightly contend, that, when this principle prompts us to the relief of human misery, it indicates the Divine intention, and our duty. Indeed, the same conclusion is deducible from the existence of the passion, whatever account be given of its origin. Whether it be an instinct or a habit, it is in fact a property of our nature, which God appointed: and the final cause for which it was appointed, is to afford to the miserable, in the compassion of their fellow-creatures, a remedy for those inequalities and distresses which God foresaw that many must be exposed to, under every general rule for the distribution of property.

Beside this, the poor have a claim founded in the law of nature, which may be thus explained:—All things were originally common. No one being able to produce a charter from Heaven, had any better title to a particular possession than his next neighbour. There were reasons for mankind's agreeing upon a separation of this common fund; and God for these reasons is presumed to have ratified it. But this separation was made and consented to, upon the expectation and condition that every one should have left a sufficiency for his subsistence, or the means of procuring it: and as no fixed laws for the regulation of property can be so contrived, as to provide for the relief of every case and distress which may arise, these cases and distresses, when their right and share in the common stock were given up or taken from them, were supposed to be left to the voluntary bounty of those who might be acquainted with the exigencies of their situation, and in the way of affording assistance. And, therefore, when the partition of property is rigidly maintained against the claims of indigence and distress, it is maintained in opposition to the intention of those who made it, and to *his*, who is the Supreme Proprietor of every thing, and who has filled the world with plenteousness, for the sustentation and comfort of all whom he sends into it.

The Christian Scriptures are more copious and explicit upon this duty than upon almost any other. The description which Christ hath left us of the proceedings of the last day, establishes the obligation of bounty beyond controversy;—"When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another.—Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.—And inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."* It is not necessary to understand this passage as a literal account of what will actually pass on that day. Supposing it only a scenical description of the rules and principles, by which the Supreme Arbiter of our destiny will regulate his decisions, it conveys the same lesson to us; it equally demonstrates of how great value and importance these duties in the sight of God are, and what stress will be laid upon them. The apostles also describe this virtue as propitiating the Divine favour in an eminent degree. And these recommendations have produced their effect. It does not appear that, before the times of Christianity, an infirmary, hospital, or public charity of any kind, existed in the world; whereas most countries in Christendom, have long abounded with these institutions. To which may be added, that a spirit of private liberality seems to flourish amidst the decay of many other virtues; not to mention the legal provision for the poor, which obtains in this country, and which was unknown and unthought of by the most humanised nations of antiquity.

St. Paul adds upon the subject an excellent direction, and which is practicable by all who have any thing to give:—"Upon the first day of the week (or any other stated time) let every one of you lay by in store, as God hath prospered him." By which I understand St. Paul to recommend what is the very thing wanting with most men, *the being charitable upon a plan;* that is, upon a deliberate comparison of our fortunes with the reasonable expenses and expectation of our families, to compute what we can spare, and

* Matthew, xxv. 31.

to lay by so much for charitable purposes in some mode or other. The *mode* will be a consideration afterwards.

The effect which Christianity produced upon some of its first converts, was such as might be looked for from a divine religion, coming with full force and miraculous evidence upon the consciences of mankind. It overwhelmed all worldly considerations in the expectation of a more important existence:—"And the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common.—Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Acts iv. 32.

Nevertheless, this community of goods, however it manifested the sincere zeal of the primitive Christians, is no precedent for our imitation. It was confined to the church at Jerusalem; continued not long there; was never enjoined upon any (Acts v. 4.;) and although it might suit with the particular circumstances of a small and select society, is altogether impracticable in a large and mixed community.

The conduct of the apostles upon the occasion, deserves to be noticed. Their followers laid down their fortunes at their feet: but so far were they from taking advantage of this unlimited confidence, to enrich themselves, or to establish their own authority, that they soon after got rid of this business, as inconsistent with the main object of their mission, and transferred the custody and management of the public fund to deacons elected to that office by the people at large. (Acts vi.)

II. *The manner of bestowing bounty; or the different kinds of charity.*

Every question between the different kinds of charity, supposes the sum bestowed to be the same.

There are three kinds of charity which prefer a claim to attention.

The first, and in my judgment one of the best, is to give stated and considerable sums, by way of pension or annuity, to individuals or families, with whose behaviour and distress we ourselves are acquainted. When I speak of *considerable* sums, I mean only that five pounds, or any other sum, given at once, or divided amongst five or fewer families, will do more good than the same sum distributed amongst a greater number in shillings or half-crowns; and that, because it is more likely to be properly applied by the persons who receive it. A poor fellow, who can find no better use for a shilling than to drink his benefactor's health, and purchase half an hour's recreation for himself, would hardly break into a guinea for any such a purpose, or be so improvident as not to lay it by for an occasion of importance, *e. g.* for his rent, his clothing, fuel, or stock of winter's provision. It is a still greater recommendation of this kind of charity, that pensions and annuities, which are paid regularly, and can be expected at the time, are the only way by which we can prevent one part of a poor man's sufferings,—the *dread* of want.

2. But as this kind of charity supposes that proper objects of such expensive benefactions fall within our private knowledge and observation, which does not happen to all, a second method of doing good, which is in every one's power who has the money to spare, is by subscription to public charities. Public charities admit of this argument in their favour, that your money goes farther towards attaining the end for which it is given, than it can do by any private and separate beneficence. A guinea, for example, contributed to an infirmary, becomes the means of providing one patient at least with a physician, surgeon, apothecary, with medicine, diet, lodging, and suitable attendance; which is not the tenth part of what the same assistance, if it could be procured at all, would cost to a sick person or family in any other situation.

3. The last, and, compared with the former, the lowest exertion of benevolence, is in the relief of beggars. Nevertheless, I by no means approve the indiscriminate rejection of all who implore our alms in this way. Some may perish by such a conduct. Men are sometimes overtaken by distress, for which all other relief would come too late. Beside which, resolutions of this kind compel us to offer such violence to our humanity, as may go near, in a little while, to suffocate the principle itself; which is a very serious consideration. A good man, if he do not surrender himself to his feelings without reserve, will at least lend an ear to importunities which come accompanied with outward attestations of distress; and after a patient audience of the complaint, will direct himself, not so much by any previous resolution which he may have formed upon the subject, as by the circumstances and credibility of the account that he receives.

There are other species of charity well contrived to make the money expended *go far:* such as keeping down the price of fuel or provision, in case of monopoly or temporary scarcity, by purchasing the articles at the best market, and retailing them at prime cost, or at a small loss; or the adding of a bounty to particular species of labour, when the price is accidentally depressed.

The proprietors of large estates have it in their power to facilitate the maintenance, and thereby to encourage the establishment, of families, (which is one of the noblest purposes to which the rich and great can convert their endeavours,) by building cottages, splitting farms, erecting manufactories, cultivating wastes, embanking the sea, draining marshes, and other expedients, which the situation of each estate points out. If the profits of these undertakings do not repay the expense, let the authors of them place the difference to the account of charity. It is true of almost all such projects, that the public is a gainer by them, whatever the owner be. And where the loss can be spared, this consideration is sufficient.

It is become a question of some importance, under what circumstances works of charity ought to be done in private, and when they may be made public without detracting from the merit of the action, if indeed they ever may; the Author of our religion having delivered a rule upon this subject which seems to enjoin universal secrecy:—"When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly." (Mat. vi. 3, 4.) From the preamble to this prohibition I think it, however, plain, that our Saviour's sole

design was to forbid *ostentation*, and all publishing of good works which proceeds from that motive. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, *to be seen of them;* otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven; therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues and in the streets, *that they may have glory of men.* Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." ver. 1, 2. There are motives for the doing our alms in public, beside those of *ostentation*, with which therefore our Saviour's rule has no concern: such as to testify our approbation of some particular species of charity, and to recommend it to others; to take off the prejudice which the want, or, which is the same thing, the suppression, of our name in the list of contributors might excite against the charity, or against ourselves. And, so long as these motives are free from any mixture of vanity, they are in no danger of invading our Saviour's prohibition; they rather seem to comply with another direction which he has left us: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." If it be necessary to propose a precise distinction upon the subject, I can think of none better than the following: When our bounty is *beyond* our fortune and station, that is, when it is more than could be expected from us, our charity should be private, if privacy be practicable: when it is not more than might be expected, it may be public: for we cannot hope to influence others to the imitation of *extraordinary* generosity, and therefore want, in the former case, the only justifiable reason for making it public.

Having thus described several different exertions of charity, it may not be improper to take notice of a species of liberality, which is not *charity*, in any sense of the word: I mean the giving of entertainments or liquor, for the sake of popularity; or the rewarding, treating, and maintaining, the companions of our diversions, as hunters, shooters, fishers, and the like. I do not say that this is criminal; I only say that it is not charity; and that we are not to suppose, because we *give*, and give to the *poor*, that it will stand in the place, or supersede the obligation, of more meritorious and disinterested bounty.

III. *The pretences by which men excuse themselves from giving to the poor.*

1. "That they have nothing to spare," *i. e.* nothing for which they have not provided some other use; nothing which their plan or expense, together with the savings they have resolved to lay by, will not exhaust: never reflecting whether it be in their *power*, or that it is their *duty*, to retrench their expenses, and contract their plan, "that they may have to give to them that need:" or, rather, that this ought to have been part of their plan originally.

2. "That they have families of their own, and that charity begins at home." The extent of this plea will be considered, when we come to explain the duty of parents.

3. "That charity does not consist in giving money, but in benevolence, philanthropy, love to all mankind, goodness of heart," &c. Hear St. James: "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding *ye give them not those things which are needful to the body;* what doth it profit?" (James ii. 15, 16.)

4. "That giving to the poor is not mentioned in St. Paul's description of charity, in the thirteenth chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians." This is not a description of charity, but of good-nature; and it is necessary that every duty be mentioned in every place.

5. "That they pay the poor-rates." They might as well allege that they pay their debts: for the poor have the same right to that portion of a man's property which the laws assign to them, that the man himself has to the remainder.

6. "That they employ many poor persons;"—for their own sake, not the poor's—otherwise it is a good plea.

7. "That the poor do not suffer so much as we imagine; that education and habit have reconciled them to the evils of their condition, and make them easy under it." Habit can never reconcile human nature to the extremities of cold, hunger, and thirst, any more than it can reconcile the hand to the touch of a red-hot iron: besides, the question is not, how unhappy any one is, but how much more happy we can make him.

8. "That these people, give them what you will, will never thank you, or think of you for it." In the first place, this is not true: in the second place, it was not for the sake of their thanks that you relieved them.

9. "That we are liable to be imposed upon." If a due inquiry be made, our merit is the same: beside that the distress is generally real, although the cause be untruly stated.

10. "That they should apply to their parishes." This is not always practicable: to which we may add, that there are many requisites to a comfortable subsistence, which parish relief does not supply; and that there are some, who would suffer almost as much from receiving parish relief as by the want of it; and, lastly, that there are many modes of charity to which this answer does not relate at all.

11. "That giving money, encourages idleness and vagrancy." This is true only of injudicious and indiscriminate generosity.

12. "That we have too many objects of charity at home, to bestow any thing upon strangers; or, that there are other charities, which are more useful, or stand in greater need." The value of this excuse depends entirely upon the *fact*, whether we actually relieve those neighbouring objects, and contribute to those other charities.

Beside all these excuses, pride, or prudery, or delicacy, or love of ease, keep one half of the world out of the way of observing what the other half suffer.

CHAPTER VI.

Resentment.

RESENTMENT may be distinguished into *anger* and *revenge*.

By *anger*, I mean the pain we suffer upon the receipt of an injury or affront, with the usual effects of that pain upon ourselves.

By *revenge*, the inflicting of pain upon the person who has injured or offended us, farther than the just ends of punishment or reparation require.

Anger prompts to revenge; but it is possible to suspend the effect, when we cannot altogether quell the principle. We are bound also to endeavour to quality and correct the principle itself. So that our duty requires two different applications of the mind; and, for that reason, anger and revenge may be considered separately.

CHAPTER VII.

Anger.

"Be ye angry, and sin not;" therefore all anger is not sinful; I suppose, because some degree of it, and upon some occasions, is inevitable.

It becomes sinful, or contradicts, however, the rule of Scripture, when it is conceived upon slight and inadequate provocations, and, when it continues long.

1. When it is conceived upon slight provocations: for, "charity suffereth long, is not easily provoked."—"Let every man be slow to anger." Peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, are enumerated among the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. and compose the true Christian temper, as to this article of duty.

2. When it continues long: for, "let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

These precepts, and all reasoning indeed on the subject, suppose the passion of anger to be within our power; and this power consists not so much in any faculty we possess of appeasing our wrath at the time, (for we are passive under the smart which an injury or affront occasions, and all we can then do, is to prevent its breaking out into action,) as in so mollifying our minds by habits of just reflection, as to be less irritated by impressions of injury, and to be sooner pacified.

Reflections proper for this purpose, and which may be called the *sedatives* of anger, are the following: the possibility of mistaking the motives from which the conduct that offends us proceeded; how often *our* offences have been the effect of inadvertency, when they were construed into indications of malice; the inducement which prompted our adversary to act as he did, and how powerfully the same inducement has, at one time or other, operated upon ourselves: that he is suffering perhaps under a contrition, which he is ashamed or wants opportunity to confess; and how ungenerous it is to triumph by coldness or insult over a spirit already humbled in secret; that the returns of kindness are sweet, and that there is neither honour, nor virtue, nor use, in resisting them:—for, some persons think themselves bound to cherish and keep alive their indignation, when they find it dying away of itself. We may remember that others have their passions, their prejudices, their favourite aims, their fears, their cautions, their interests, their sudden impulses, their varieties of apprehension, as well as we: we may recollect what hath sometimes passed in our minds, when we have gotten on the wrong side of a quarrel, and imagine the same to be passing in our adversary's mind now; when we became sensible of our misbehaviour, what palliations we perceived in it, and expected others to perceive; how we were affected by the kindness, and felt the superiority, of a generous reception and ready forgiveness; how persecution revived our spirits with our enmity, and seemed to justify the conduct in ourselves which we before blamed. Add to this, the indecency of extravagant anger; how it renders us, whilst it lasts, the scorn and sport of all about us, of which it leaves us, when it ceases, sensible and ashamed; the inconveniences and irretrievable misconduct into which our irascibility has sometimes betrayed us; the friendships it has lost us; the distresses and embarrassments in which we have been involved by it; and the sore repentance which, on one account or other, it always cost us.

But the reflection calculated above all others to allay the haughtiness of temper which is ever finding out provocations, and which renders anger so impetuous, is that which the Gospel proposes; namely, that we ourselves are, or shortly shall be, suppliants for mercy and pardon at the judgment-seat of God. Imagine our secret sins disclosed and brought to light; imagine us thus humbled and exposed; trembling under the hand of God; casting ourselves on his compassion; crying out for mercy; imagine such a creature to talk of satisfaction and revenge; refusing to be entreated, disdaining to forgive; extreme to mark and to resent what is done amiss;—imagine, I say, this, and you can hardly frame to yourself an instance of more impious and unnatural arrogance.

The point is, to habituate ourselves to these reflections, till they rise up of their own accord when they are wanted, that is, instantly upon the receipt of an injury or affront, and with such force and colouring, as both to mitigate the paroxysms of our anger at the time, and at length to produce an alteration in the temper and disposition itself.

CHAPTER VIII.

Revenge.

All pain occasioned to another in consequence of an offence or injury received from him, further than what is calculated to procure reparation, or promote the just ends of punishment, is so much revenge.

There can be no difficulty in knowing when we occasion pain to another; nor much in distinguishing whether we do so, with a view only to the ends of punishment, or from revenge; for, in the one case we proceed with reluctance, in the other with pleasure.

It is highly *probable*, from the light of nature, that a passion, which seeks its gratification immediately and expressly in giving pain, is disagreeable to the benevolent will and counsels of the Creator. Other passions and pleasures may, and often do, produce pain to some one: but then pain is not, as it is here, the object of the passion, and the direct cause of the pleasure. This *probability* is converted into certainty, if we give credit to the authority which dictated the several passages of the Christian Scriptures that condemn revenge, or, what is the same thing, which enjoin forgiveness.

We will set down the principal of these passages; and endeavour to collect from them, what conduct upon the whole is allowed towards an enemy, and what is forbidden.

"If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—"And his lord was

wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him: so likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."—"Put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—"Be patient towards all men; see that none render evil for evil to any man."—"Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for, in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."*

I think it evident, from some of these passages taken separately, and still more so from all of them together, that *revenge*, as described in the beginning of this chapter, is forbidden in every degree, under all forms, and upon every occasion. We are likewise forbidden to refuse to an enemy even the most imperfect right: "if he hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink;"† which are examples of imperfect rights. If one who has offended us, solicit from us a vote to which his qualifications entitle him, we may not refuse it from motives of resentment, or the remembrance of what we have suffered at his hands. His right, and our obligation which follows the right, are not altered by his enmity to us, or by ours to him.

On the other hand, I do not conceive that these prohibitions were intended to interfere with the punishment or prosecution of public offenders. In the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew, our Saviour tells his disciples, "If thy brother who has trespassed against thee neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican." Immediately after this, when St. Peter asked him, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Christ replied, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven;" that is, as often as he repeats the offence. From these two adjoining passages compared together, we are authorised to conclude that the forgiveness of an enemy is not inconsistent with the proceedings against him as a public offender; and that the discipline established in religious or civil societies, for the restraint or punishment of criminals, ought to be upholden.

If the magistrate be not tied down with these prohibitions from the execution of his office, neither is the prosecutor; for the office of the prosecutor is as necessary as that of the magistrate.

Nor, by parity of reason, are private persons withholden from the correction of vice, when it is in their power to exercise it; provided they be assured that it is the guilt which provokes them, and not the injury; and that their motives are pure from all mixture and every particle of that spirit which delights and triumphs in the humiliation of an adversary.

Thus it is no breach of Christian charity, to withdraw our company or civility when the same tends to discountenance any vicious practice. This is one branch of that extrajudicial discipline, which supplies the defects and the remissness of law; and is expressly authorised by St. Paul (1 Cor. v. 11.) "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no not to eat." The use of this association against vice continues to be experienced in one remarkable instance, and might be extended with good effect to others. The confederacy amongst women of character, to exclude from their society kept-mistresses and prostitutes, contributes more perhaps to discourage that condition of life, and prevents greater numbers from entering into it, than all the considerations of prudence and religion put together.

We are likewise allowed to practise so much caution as not to put ourselves in the way of injury, or invite the repetition of it. If a servant or tradesman has cheated us, we are not bound to trust him again; for this is to encourage him in his dishonest practices, which is doing him much harm.

Where a benefit can be conferred only upon one or few, and the choice of the person upon whom it is conferred is a proper object of favour, we are at liberty to prefer those who have not offended us to those who have; the contrary being no where required.

Christ, who, as hath been well demonstrated,* estimated virtues by their solid utility, and not by their fashion or popularity, prefers this of the forgiveness of injuries to every other. He enjoins it oftener; with more earnestness; under a greater variety of forms; and with this weighty and peculiar circumstance, that the forgiveness of others is the condition upon which alone we are to expect, or even ask, from God, forgiveness for ourselves. And this preference is justified by the superior importance of the virtue itself. The feuds and animosities in families, and between neighbours, which disturb the intercourse of human life, and collectively compose half the misery of it, have their foundation in the want of a forgiving temper; and can never cease, but by the exercise of this virtue, on one side, or on both.

CHAPTER IX.

Duelling.

Duelling as a punishment is absurd; because it is an equal chance, whether the punishment fall upon the offender, or the person offended. Nor is it much better as a reparation: it being difficult to explain in what the *satisfaction* consists, or how it tends to undo the injury, or to afford a compensation for the damage already sustained.

The truth is, it is not considered as either. A law of honour having annexed the imputation of cowardice to patience under an affront, challenges are given and accepted with no other design than to prevent or wipe off this suspicion; without malice against the adversary, generally without a

* Matt. vi. 14, 15: xviii. 34, 35. Col. iii. 12, 13. 1 Thes. v. 14, 15. Rom. xii. 19, 20, 21.

† See also Exodus, xxiii. 4. "If thou meet thine enemy's ox, or his ass, going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again; if thou see the ass of him that hateth thee, lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him."

* See a View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion.

wish to destroy him, or any other concern than to preserve the duellist's own reputation and reception in the world.

The unreasonableness of this rule of manners is one consideration; the duty and conduct of individuals, while such a rule exists, is another.

As to which, the proper and single question is this, whether a regard for our own reputation is, or is not, sufficient to justify the taking away the life of another?

Murder is forbidden; and wherever human life is deliberately taken away, otherwise than by public authority, there is murder. The value and security of human life make this rule necessary; for I do not see what other idea or definition of murder can be admitted, which will not let in so much private violence, as to render society a scene of peril and bloodshed.

If unauthorised laws of honour be allowed to create exceptions to divine prohibitions, there is an end of all morality, as founded in the will of the Deity; and the obligation of every duty may, at one time or other, be discharged by the caprice and fluctuations of fashion.

"But a sense of shame is so much torture; and no relief presents itself otherwise than by an attempt upon the life of our adversary." What then? The distress which men suffer by the want of money is oftentimes extreme, and no resource can be discovered but that of removing a life which stands between the distressed person and his inheritance. The motive in this case is as urgent, and the means much the same, as in the former: yet this case finds no advocate.

Take away the circumstance of the duellist's exposing his own life, and it becomes assassination; add this circumstance, and what difference does it make? None but this, that the fewer perhaps will imitate the example, and human life will be somewhat more safe, when it cannot be attacked without equal danger to the aggressor's own. Experience, however, proves that there is fortitude enough in most men to undertake this hazard; and were it otherwise, the defence, at best, would be only that which a highwayman or housebreaker might plead, whose attempt had been so daring and desperate, that few were likely to repeat the same.

In expostulating with the duellist, I all along suppose his adversary to fall. Which supposition I am at liberty to make, because, if he have no right to kill his adversary, he has none to attempt it.

In return, I forbear from applying to the case of duelling the Christian principle of the forgiveness of injuries; because it is possible to suppose the injury to be forgiven, and the duellist to act entirely from a concern for his own reputation: where this is not the case, the guilt of duelling is manifest, and is greater.

In this view it seems unnecessary to distinguish between him who gives, and him who accepts, a challenge: for, on the one hand, they incur an equal hazard of destroying life; and on the other, both act upon the same persuasion, that what they do is necessary, in order to recover or preserve the good opinion of the world.

Public opinion is not easily controlled by civil institutions: for which reason I question whether any regulations can be contrived, of sufficient force to suppress or change the rule of honour, which stigmatises all scruples about duelling with the reproach of cowardice.

The insufficiency of the redress which the law of the land affords, for those injuries which chiefly affect a man in his sensibility and reputation, tempts many to redress themselves. Prosecutions for such offences, by the trifling damages that are recovered, serve only to make the sufferer more ridiculous.—This ought to be remedied.

For the army, where the point of honour is cultivated with exquisite attention and refinement, I would establish *a Court of Honour*, with a power of awarding those submissions and acknowledgments, which it is generally the purpose of a challenge to obtain; and it might grow into a fashion, with persons of rank of all professions, to refer their quarrels to this tribunal.

Duelling, as the law now stands, can seldom be overtaken by legal punishment. The challenge, appointment, and other previous circumstances, which indicate the intention with which the combatants met, being suppressed, nothing appears to a court of justice, but the actual rencounter; and if a person be slain when actually fighting with his adversary, the law deems his death nothing more than manslaughter.

CHAPTER X.

Litigation.

"If it be *possible*, live peaceably with all men;" which precept contains an indirect confession that this is not always *possible*.

The instances * in the fifth chapter of Saint Matthew are rather to be understood as proverbial methods of describing the general duties of forgiveness and benevolence, and the temper which we ought to aim at acquiring, than as directions to be specifically observed; or of themselves of any great importance to be observed. The first of these is, "If thine enemy smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also;" yet, when one of the officers struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, we find Jesus rebuking him for the outrage with becoming indignation; "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" (John xviii. 43.) It may be observed, likewise, that the several examples are drawn from instances of small and tolerable injuries. A rule which forbade all opposition to injury, or defence against it, could have no other effect, than to put the good in subjection to the bad, and deliver one half of mankind to the depredations of the other half; which must be the case, so long as some considered themselves as bound by such a rule, whilst others despised it. Saint Paul, though no one inculcated forgiveness and forbearance with a deeper sense of the value and obligation of these virtues, did not interpret either of them to require an unresisting submission to every contumely, or a neglect of the means of safety and self-defence. He took refuge in the laws of his country, and in the privileges of a Roman citizen, from the conspiracy of the Jews (Acts xxv. 11;) and from the clandestine violence of the chief captain (Acts xxii. 25.) And yet this is the same apostle who

* "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also: and if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

reproved the litigiousness of his Corinthian converts with so much severity. "Now, therefore, there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

On the one hand, therefore, Christianity excludes all vindictive motives, and all frivolous causes, of prosecution; so that where the injury is small, where no good purpose of public example is answered, where forbearance is not likely to invite a repetition of the injury, or where the expense of an action becomes a punishment too severe for the offence; there the Christian is withholden by the authority of his religion from going to law.

On the other hand, a law-suit is inconsistent with no rule of the Gospel, when it is instituted,

1. For the establishing of some important right.
2. For the procuring a compensation for some considerable damage.
3. For the preventing of future injury.

But since it is supposed to be undertaken simply with a view to the ends of justice and safety, the prosecutor of the action is bound to confine himself to the cheapest process which will accomplish these ends, as well as to consent to any peaceable expedient for the same purpose; as to *a reference*, in which the arbitrators can do, what the law cannot, divide the damage, when the fault is mutual; or to *a compounding of the dispute*, by accepting a compensation in the gross, without entering into articles and items, which it is often very difficult to adjust separately.

As to the rest, the duty of the contending parties may be expressed in the following directions:

Not by appeals to prolong a suit against your own conviction.

Not to undertake or defend a suit against a poor adversary, or render it more dilatory or expensive than necessary, with the hope of intimidating or wearing him out by the expense.

Not to influence *evidence* by authority or expectation;

Nor to stifle any in your possession, although it make against you.

Hitherto we have treated of civil actions. In criminal prosecutions, the private injury should be forgotten, and the prosecutor proceed with the same temper, and upon the same motives, as the magistrate; the one being a necessary minister of justice as well as the other, and both bound to direct their conduct by a dispassionate care of the public welfare.

In whatever degree the punishment of an offender is conducive, or his escape dangerous, to the interest of the community, in the same degree is the party against whom the crime was committed bound to prosecute; because such prosecutions must in their nature originate from the sufferer.

Therefore great public crimes, as robberies, forgeries, and the like, ought not to be spared, from an apprehension of trouble or expense in carrying on the prosecution, from false shame, or misplaced compassion.

There are many offences, such as nuisances, neglect of public roads, forestalling, engrossing, smuggling, sabbath-breaking, profaneness, drunkenness, prostitution, the keeping of lewd or disorderly houses, the writing, publishing, or exposing to sale, lascivious books or pictures, with some others, the prosecution of which, being of equal concern to the whole neighbourhood, cannot be charged as a peculiar obligation upon any.

Nevertheless, there is great merit in the person who undertakes such prosecutions upon proper motives; which amounts to the same thing.

The character of an *informer* is in this country undeservedly odious. But where any public advantage is likely to be attained by information, or other activity in promoting the execution of the laws, a good man will despise a prejudice founded in no just reason, or will acquit himself of the imputation of interested designs by giving away his share of the penalty.

On the other hand, prosecutions for the sake of the reward, or for the gratification of private enmity, where the offence produces no public mischief, or where it arises from ignorance or inadvertency, are reprobated under the general description of *applying a rule of law to a purpose for which it was not intended.* Under which description may be ranked an officious revival of the laws against Popish priests, and dissenting teachers.

CHAPTER XI.

Gratitude.

EXAMPLES of ingratitude check and discourage voluntary beneficence: and in this, the mischief of ingratitude consists. Nor is the mischief small; for after all is done that can be done, towards providing for the public happiness, by prescribing rules of justice, and enforcing the observation of them by penalties or compulsion, much must be left to those offices of kindness, which men remain at liberty to exert or withhold. Now not only the choice of the objects, but the quantity and even the existence of this sort of kindness in the world, depends, in a great measure, upon the return which it receives: and this is a consideration of general importance.

A second reason for cultivating a grateful temper in ourselves, is the following: The same principle, which is touched with the kindness of a human benefactor, is capable of being affected by the divine goodness, and of becoming, under the influence of that affection, a source of the purest and most exalted virtue. The love of God is the sublimest gratitude. It is a mistake, therefore, to imagine, that this virtue is omitted in the Christian Scriptures; for every precept which commands us "to love God, because he first loved us," presupposes the principle of gratitude, and directs it to its proper object.

It is impossible to particularise the several expressions of gratitude, inasmuch as they vary with the character and situation of the benefactor, and with the opportunities of the person obliged; which variety admits of no bounds.

It may be observed, however, that gratitude can never oblige a man to do what is wrong, and what by consequence he is previously obliged not to do. It is no ingratitude to refuse to do, what we cannot reconcile to any apprehensions of our duty; but it is ingratitude and hypocrisy together, to pretend this reason, when it is not the real one: and the frequency of such pretences has brought this apology for non-compliance with the will of a benefactor into unmerited disgrace.

It has long been accounted a violation of delicacy and generosity to upbraid men with the favours they have received: but it argues a total destitution of both these qualities, as well as of moral probity, to take advantage of that ascendency which the conferring of benefits justly creates, to draw or drive those whom we have obliged into mean or dishonest compliances.

CHAPTER XII.

Slander.

SPEAKING is acting, both in philosophical strictness, and as to all moral purposes: for if the mischief and motive of our conduct be the same, the means which we use make no difference.

And this is in effect what our Saviour declares, Matt. xii. 37:—"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned:" by thy words, as well, that is, as by thy actions; the one shall be taken into the account as well as the other, for they both possess the same property of voluntarily producing good or evil.

Slander may be distinguished into two kinds: *malicious* slander, and *inconsiderate* slander.

Malicious slander is the relating of either truth or falsehood, for the purpose of creating misery.

I acknowledge that the truth or falsehood of what is related, varies the degree of guilt considerably; and that slander, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, signifies the circulation of mischievous *falsehood:* but truth may be made instrumental to the success of malicious designs as well as falsehood; and if the end be bad, the means cannot be innocent.

I think the idea of slander ought to be confined to the production of *gratuitous* mischief. When we have an end or interest of our own to serve, if we attempt to compass it by falsehood, it is *fraud;* if by a publication of the truth, it is not without some additional circumstance of breach of promise, betraying of confidence, or the like, to be deemed criminal.

Sometimes the pain is intended for the person to whom we are speaking; at other times, an enmity is to be gratified by the prejudice or disquiet of a third person. To infuse suspicions, to kindle or continue disputes, to avert the favour and esteem of benefactors from their dependents, to render some one whom we dislike contemptible or obnoxious in the public opinion, are all offices of slander; of which the guilt must be measured by the intensity and extent of the misery produced.

The disguises under which slander is conveyed, whether in a whisper, with injunctions of secrecy by way of caution, or with affected reluctance, are all so many aggravations of the offence, as they indicate more deliberation and design.

Inconsiderate slander is a different offence, although the same mischief actually follow, and although the mischief might have been foreseen. The not being conscious of that design which we have hitherto attributed to the slanderer, makes the difference.

The guilt here consists in the want of that regard to the consequences of our conduct, which a just affection for human happiness, and concern for our duty would not have failed to have produced in us. And it is no answer to this crimination to say, that we entertained no evil *design.* A servant may be a very bad servant, and yet seldom or never *design* to act in opposition to his master's interest or will: and his master may justly punish such servant for a thoughtlessness and neglect nearly as prejudicial as deliberate disobedience. I accuse you not, he may say, of any express intention to hurt me; but had not the fear of my displeasure, the care of my interest, and indeed all the qualities which constitute the merit of a good servant, been wanting in you, they would not only have excluded every direct purpose of giving me uneasiness, but have been so far present to your thoughts, as to have checked that unguarded licentiousness by which I have suffered so much, and inspired you in its place with an habitual solicitude about the effects and tendency of what you did or said.—This very much resembles the case of all sins of inconsideration; and, amongst the foremost of these, that of inconsiderate slander.

Information communicated for the real purpose of warning, or cautioning, is not slander.

Indiscriminate praise is the opposite of slander, but it is the opposite extreme; and, however it may affect to be thought to be excess of candour, is commonly the effusion of a frivolous understanding, or proceeds from a settled contempt of all moral distinctions.

BOOK III.

PART III.

OF RELATIVE DUTIES WHICH RESULT FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SEXES.

THE constitution of the sexes is the foundation of *marriage.*

Collateral to the subject of marriage, are fornication, seduction, adultery, incest, polygamy, divorce.

Consequential to marriage, is the relation and reciprocal duty of parent and child.

We will treat of these subjects in the following order: first, of the public use of marriage institutions; secondly, of the subjects collateral to marriage, in the order in which we have here proposed them; thirdly, of marriage itself; and, lastly, of the relation and reciprocal duties of parents and children.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Public Use of Marriage Institutions.

THE public use of marriage institutions consists in their promoting the following beneficial effects.

1. The private comfort of individuals, especially of the female sex. It may be true, that all are not interested in this reason; nevertheless, it is a reason to all for abstaining from any conduct which tends in its general consequence to obstruct marriage: for whatever promotes the happiness of the majority, is binding upon the whole.

2. The production of the greatest number of

nealthy children, their better education, and the making of due provision for their settlement in life.

3. The peace of human society, in cutting off a principal source of contention, by assigning one or more women to one man, and protecting his exclusive right by sanctions of morality and law.

4. The better government of society, by distributing the community into separate families, and appointing over each the authority of a master of a family, which has more actual influence than all civil authority put together.

5. The same end, in the additional security which the state receives for the good behaviour of its citizens, from the solicitude they feel for the welfare of their children, and from their being confined to permanent habitations.

6. The encouragement of industry.

Some ancient nations appear to have been more sensible of the importance of marriage institutions than we are. The Spartans obliged their citizens to marry by penalties, and the Romans encouraged theirs by the *jus trium liberorum*. A man who had no child, was entitled by the Roman law only to one half of any legacy that should be left him, that is, at the most, could only receive one half of the testator's fortune.

CHAPTER II.

Fornication.

The first and great mischief, and by consequence the guilt, of promiscuous concubinage, consists in its tendency to diminish marriages, and thereby to defeat the several beneficial purposes enumerated in the preceding chapter.

Promiscuous concubinage discourages marriage, by abating the chief temptation to it. The male part of the species will not undertake the encumbrance, expense, and restraint of married life, if they can gratify their passions at a cheaper price; and they will undertake any thing, rather than not gratify them.

The reader will learn to comprehend the magnitude of this mischief, by attending to the importance and variety of the uses to which marriage is subservient; and by recollecting withal, that the malignity and moral quality of each crime is not to be estimated by the particular effect of one offence, or of one person's offending, but by the general tendency and consequence of crimes of the same nature. The libertine may not be conscious that these irregularities hinder his own marriage, from which he is deterred, he may allege, by different considerations; much less does he perceive how *his* indulgences can hinder other men from marrying; but what will he say would be the consequence, if the same licentiousness were universal? or what should hinder its becoming universal, if it be innocent or allowable in him?

2. Fornication supposes prostitution; and prostitution brings and leaves the victims of it to almost certain misery. It is no small quantity of misery in the aggregate, which, between want, disease, and insult, is suffered by those outcasts of human society, who infest populous cities; the whole of which is a *general consequence* of fornication, and to the increase and continuance of which, every act and instance of fornication contributes.

3. Fornication* produces habits of ungovernable lewdness, which introduces the more aggravated crimes of seduction, adultery, violation, &c. Likewise, however it be accounted for, the criminal commerce of the sexes corrupts and depraves the mind and moral character more than any single species of vice whatsoever. That ready perception of guilt, that prompt and decisive resolution against it, which constitutes a virtuous character, is seldom found in persons addicted to these indulgences. They prepare an easy admission for every sin that seeks it; are, in low life, usually the first stage in men's progress to the most desperate villanies; and, in high life, to that lamented dissoluteness of principle, which manifests itself in a profligacy of public conduct, and a contempt of the obligations of religion and of moral probity. Add to this, that habits of libertinism incapacitate and indispose the mind for all intellectual, moral, and religious pleasures; which is a great loss to any man's happiness.

4. Fornication perpetuates a disease, which may be accounted one of the sorest maladies of human nature; and the effects of which are said to visit the constitution of even distant generations.

The passion being natural, proves that it was intended to be gratified: but under what restrictions, or whether without any, must be collected from different considerations.

The Christian Scriptures condemn fornication absolutely and peremptorily. "Out of the heart," says our Saviour, "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, *fornication*, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man." These are Christ's own words: and one word from him upon the subject, is final. It may be observed with what society fornication is classed; with murders, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. I do not mean that these crimes are all equal, because they are all mentioned together; but it proves that they are all crimes. The apostles are more full upon this topic. One well-known passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, may stand in the place of all others; because, admitting the authority by which the apostles of Christ spake and wrote, it is decisive: "Marriage and the bed undefiled is honourable amongst all men: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge;" which was a great deal to say, at a time when it was not agreed, even amongst philosophers themselves, that fornication was a crime.

The Scriptures give no sanction to those austerities, which have been since imposed upon the world under the name of Christ's religion; as the celibacy of the clergy, the praise of perpetual virginity, the *prohibitio concubitus cum gravida uxore;* but with a just knowledge of, and regard to, the condition and interest of the human species, have provided, in the marriage of one man with one woman, an adequate gratification for the propensities of their nature, and have *restricted* them to that gratification.

The avowed toleration, and in some countries the licensing, taxing, and regulating of public brothels, has appeared to the people an authorising of fornication; and has contributed, with other

* Of this passion it has been truly said, that "irregularity has no limits; that one excess draws on another; that the most easy, therefore, as well as the most excellent way of being virtuous, is to be so entirely." Ogden, Serm. xvi.

causes, so far to vitiate the public opinion, that there is no practice of which the immorality is so little thought of or acknowledged, although there are few in which it can more plainly be made out. The legislators who have patronised receptacles of prostitution, ought to have foreseen this effect, as well as considered, that whatever facilitates fornication, diminishes marriages. And, as to the usual apology for this relaxed discipline, the danger of greater enormities, if access to prostitutes were too strictly watched and prohibited, it will be time enough to look to that, when the laws and the magistrates have done their utmost. The greatest vigilance of both will do no more, than oppose some bounds and some difficulties to this intercourse. And, after all, these pretended fears are without foundation in experience. The men are in all respects the most virtuous, in countries where the women are most chaste.

There is a species of cohabitation, distinguishable, no doubt, from vagrant concubinage, and which, by reason of its resemblance to marriage, may be thought to participate of the sanctity and innocence of that estate; I mean the case of *kept mistresses*, under the favourable circumstance of mutual fidelity. This case I have heard defended by some such apology as the following:

"That the marriage-rite being different in different countries, and in the same country amongst different sects, and with some scarce any thing; and, moreover, not being prescribed or even mentioned in Scripture, can be accounted for only as of a form and ceremony of human invention: that, consequently, if a man and woman betroth and confine themselves to each other, their intercourse must be the same, as to all moral purposes, as if they were legally married; for the addition or omission of that which is a mere form and ceremony, can make no difference in the sight of God, or in the actual nature of right and wrong."

To all which it may be replied,

1. If the situation of the parties be the same thing as marriage, why do they not marry?

2. If the man choose to have it in his power to dismiss the woman at his pleasure, or to retain her in a state of humiliation and dependence inconsistent with the rights which marriage would confer upon her, it is not the same thing.

It is not at any rate the same thing to the children.

Again, as to the marriage-rite being a mere form, and that also variable, the same may be said of signing and sealing of bonds, wills, deeds of conveyance, and the like, which yet make a great difference in the rights and obligations of the parties concerned in them.

And with respect to the rite not being appointed in Scripture;—the Scriptures forbid fornication, that is, cohabitation without marriage, leaving it to the law of each country to pronounce what is, or what makes, a marriage; in like manner as they forbid thefts, that is, the taking away of another's property, leaving it to the municipal law to fix what makes the thing property, or whose it is; which also, as well as marriage, depend upon arbitrary and mutable forms.

Laying aside the injunctions of Scripture, the plain account of the question seems to be this: It is immoral, because it is pernicious, that men and women should cohabit, without undertaking certain irrevocable obligations, and mutually conferring certain civil rights; if, therefore, the law has annexed these rights and obligations to certain forms, so that they cannot be secured or undertaken by any other means, which is the case here (for, whatever the parties may promise to each other, nothing but the marriage-ceremony can make their promise irrevocable,) it becomes in the same degree immoral, that men and women should cohabit without the interposition of these forms.

If fornication be criminal, all those incentives which lead to it are accessaries to the crime; as lascivious conversation, whether expressed in obscene, or disguised under modest phrases; also wanton songs, pictures, books; the writing, publishing, and circulating of which, whether out of frolic, or for some pitiful profit, is productive of so extensive a mischief from so mean a temptation, that few crimes, within the reach of private wickedness, have more to answer for, or less to plead in their excuse.

Indecent conversation, and by parity of reason all the rest, are forbidden by Saint Paul, Eph. iv. 29. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth;" and again, Col. iii. 8. "Put off filthy communication out of your mouth."

The invitation, or voluntary admission, of impure thoughts, or the suffering them to get possession of the imagination, falls within the same description, and is condemned by Christ, Matt. v. 28. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Christ, by thus enjoining a regulation of the thoughts, strikes at the root of the evil.

CHAPTER III.

Seduction.

THE *seducer* practises the same stratagems to draw a woman's person into his power, that a *swindler* does to get possession of your goods, or money; yet the *law of honour*, which abhors deceit, applauds the address of a successful intrigue; so much is this capricious rule guided by names, and with such facility does it accommodate itself to the pleasures and conveniency of higher life!

Seduction is seldom accomplished without fraud; and the fraud is by so much more criminal than other frauds, as the injury effected by it is greater, continues longer, and less admits reparation.

This injury is threefold: to the woman, to her family, and to the public.

I. The injury to the woman is made up of the *pain* she suffers from shame, or the *loss* she sustains in her reputation and prospects of marriage, and of the *depravation of her moral principle.*

1. This *pain* must be extreme, if we may judge of it from those barbarous endeavours to conceal their disgrace, to which women, under such circumstances, sometimes have recourse; comparing also this barbarity with their passionate fondness for their offspring in other cases. Nothing but an agony of mind the most insupportable can induce a woman to forget her nature, and the pity which even a stranger would shew to a helpless and imploring infant. It is true, that all are not urged to this extremity; but if any are, it affords an indication of how much all suffer from the same cause. What shall we say to the authors of such mischief?

2. The *loss* which a woman sustains by the ruin of her reputation, almost exceeds computation. Every person's happiness depends in part upon the respect and reception which they meet with in the world; and it is no inconsiderable mortification, even to the firmest tempers, to be rejected from the society of their equals, or received there with neglect and disdain. But this is not all, nor the worst. By a rule of life, which it is not easy to blame, and which it is impossible to alter, a woman loses with her chastity the chance of marrying at all, or in any manner equal to the hopes she had been accustomed to entertain. Now marriage, whatever it be to a man, is that from which every woman expects her chief happiness. And this is still more true in low life, of which condition the women are who are most exposed to solicitations of this sort. Add to this, that where a woman's maintenance depends upon her character (as it does, in a great measure, with those who are to support themselves by service,) little sometimes is left to the forsaken sufferer, but to starve for want of employment, or to have recourse to prostitution for food and raiment.

3. As a woman collects her virtue into this point, the loss of her chastity is generally the *destruction of her moral principle;* and this consequence is to be apprehended, whether the criminal intercourse be discovered or not.

II. The injury to the family may be understood, by the application of that infallible rule, "of doing to others, what *we would* that others should do unto us."—Let a father or a brother say, for what consideration they would suffer this injury to a daughter or a sister; and whether any, or even a total, loss of fortune, could create equal affliction and distress. And when they reflect upon this, let them distinguish, if they can, between a robbery, committed upon their property by fraud or forgery, and the ruin of their happiness by the treachery of a seducer.

III. The public at large lose the benefit of the woman's service in her proper place and destination, as a wife and parent. This, to the whole community, may be little; but it is often more than all the good which the seducer does to the community can recompense. Moreover, prostitution is supplied by seduction; and in proportion to the danger there is of the woman's betaking herself, after her first sacrifice, to a life of public lewdness, the seducer is answerable for the multiplied evils to which his crime gives birth.

Upon the whole, if we pursue the effects of seduction through the complicated misery which it occasions, and if it be right to estimate crimes by the mischief they knowingly produce, it will appear something more than mere invective to assert, that not one half of the crimes, for which men suffer death by the laws of England, are so flagitious as this.*

CHAPTER IV.

Adultery.

A NEW sufferer is introduced,—the injured husband, who receives a wound in his sensibility and affections, the most painful and incurable that human nature knows. In all other respects, adultery on the part of the man who solicits the chastity of a married woman, includes the crime of seduction, and is attended with the same mischief.

The infidelity of the woman is aggravated by cruelty to her children, who are generally involved in their parents' shame, and always made unhappy by their quarrel.

If it be said that these consequences are chargeable not so much upon the crime, as the discovery, we answer, first, that the crime could not be discovered unless it were committed, and that the commission is never secure from discovery; and secondly, that if we excuse adulterous connexions, whenever they can hope to escape detection, which is the conclusion to which this argument conducts us, we leave the husband no other security for his wife's chastity, than in her want of opportunity or temptation; which would probably either deter men from marrying, or render marriage a state of such jealousy and alarm to the husband, as must end in the slavery and confinement of the wife.

The vow, by which married persons mutually engage their fidelity, "is witnessed before God," and accompanied with circumstances of solemnity and religion, which approach to the nature of an oath. The married offender therefore incurs a crime little short of perjury, and the seduction of a married woman is little less than subornation of perjury;—and this guilt is independent of the discovery.

All behaviour which is designed, or which knowingly tends, to captivate the affection of a married woman, is a barbarous intrusion upon the peace and virtue of a family, though it fall short of adultery.

The usual and only apology for adultery is, the prior transgression of the other party. There are degrees, no doubt, in this, as in other crimes: and so far as the bad effects of adultery are anticipated by the conduct of the husband or wife who offends first, the guilt of the second offender is less. But this falls very far short of a justification; unless it could be shown that the obligation of the marriage-vow depends upon the condition of reciprocal fidelity; for which construction there appears no foundation, either in expediency, or in the terms of the promise, or in the design of the legislature which prescribed the marriage-rite. Moreover, the rule contended for by this plea, has a manifest tendency to multiply the offence, but none to reclaim the offender.

The way of considering the offence of one party as a *provocation* to the other, and the other as only *retaliating* the injury by repeating the crime, is a childish trifling with words.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery," was an interdict delivered by God himself. By the Jewish law, adultery was capital to both parties in the crime: "Even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and adulteress shall surely be put to death."—Levit. xx. 10. Which passages prove, that the Divine Legislator placed a great difference between adultery and fornication. And with this agree the Christian Scriptures: for, in almost all the catalogues they have left us of crimes and criminals, they enumerate "fornication, adultery, whoremongers, adulterers." (Matthew xv. 19. 1 Cor. vi. 9. Gal.

* Yet the law has provided no punishment for this offence beyond a pecuniary satisfaction to the injured family; and this can only be come at, by one of the quaintest fictions in the world: by the father's bringing his action against the seducer, for the loss of his daughter's service, during her pregnancy and nurturing.

v. 9. Heb. viii. 4.) by which mention of both, they show that they did not consider them as the same: but that the crime of adultery was, in their apprehension, distinct from, and accumulated upon that of fornication.

The history of the woman taken in adultery, recorded in the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel, has been thought by some to give countenance to that crime. As Christ told the woman, "Neither do I *condemn* thee," we must believe, it is said, that he deemed her conduct either not criminal, or not a crime, however, of the heinous nature which we represent it to be. A more attentive examination of the case will, I think, convince us, that from *it* nothing can be concluded as to Christ's opinion concerning adultery, either one way or the other. The transaction is thus related: "Early in the morning Jesus came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him: and he sat down and taught them. And the Scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery: when they had set her in the midst, they say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act: now Moses in the law commanded that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? This they said tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lift up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin amongst you, let him first cast a stone at her; and again he stooped down and wrote on the ground: and they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lift up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said unto him, No man, Lord. And he said unto her, *Neither do I condemn thee;* go, and sin no more."

"This they said tempting him, that they might have to accuse him;" to draw him, that is, into an exercise of judicial authority, that they might have to accuse him before the Roman governor, of usurping or intermeddling with the civil government. This was their design; and Christ's behaviour throughout the whole affair proceeded from a knowledge of this design, and a determination to defeat it. He gives them at first a cold and sullen reception, well suited to the insidious intention with which they came: "He stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not." "When they *continued* asking him," when they teased him to speak, he dismissed them with a rebuke, which the impertinent malice of their errand, as well as the sacred character of many of them, deserved: "He that is without sin (that is, this sin) among you, let him first cast a stone at her." This had its effect. Stung with the reproof, and disappointed of their aim, they stole away one by one, and left Jesus and the woman alone. And then follows the conversation, which is the part of the narrative most material to our present subject. "Jesus said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." Now, when Christ asked the woman, "Hath no man *condemned* thee?" he certainly spoke, and was understood by the woman to speak, of a legal and judicial condemnation; otherwise, her answer, "No man, Lord," was not true. In every other sense of condemnation, as blame, censure, reproof, private judgment, and the like, many had condemned her; all those indeed who had brought her to Jesus. If then a judicial sentence was what Christ meant by *condemning* in the question, the common use of language requires us to suppose that he meant the same in his reply, "Neither do I condemn thee," *i. e.* I pretend to no judicial character or authority over thee; it is no office or business of mine to pronounce or execute the sentence of the law.

When Christ adds, "Go, and sin no more," he in effect tells her, that she had sinned already: but as to the degree or quality of the sin, or Christ's opinion concerning it, nothing is declared, or can be inferred, either way.

Adultery, which was punished with death during the Usurpation, is now regarded by the law of England only as a civil injury; for which the imperfect satisfaction that money can afford, may be recovered by the husband.

CHAPTER V.

Incest.

In order to preserve chastity in families, and between persons of different sexes, brought up and living together in a state of unreserved intimacy, it is necessary, by every method possible, to inculcate an abhorrence of incestuous conjunctions; which abhorrence can only be upholden by the absolute reprobation of *all* commerce of the sexes between near relations. Upon this principle, the *marriage* as well as other cohabitations of brothers and sisters, of lineal kindred, and of all who usually live in the same family, may be said to be forbidden by the law of nature.

Restrictions which extend to remoter degrees of kindred than what this reason makes it necessary to prohibit from intermarriage, are founded in the authority of the positive law which ordains them, and can only be justified by their tendency to diffuse wealth, to connect families, or to promote some political advantage.

The Levitical law, which is received in this country, and from which the rule of the Roman law differs very little, prohibits* marriage between relations, within *three* degrees of kindred; computing the generations, not from, but through the common ancestor, and accounting affinity the same as consanguinity. The issue, however, of such marriages, are not bastardised, unless the parents be divorced during their life-time.

The Egyptians are said to have allowed of the marriage of brothers and sisters. Amongst the Athenians, a very singular regulation prevailed; brothers and sisters of the half-blood, if related by the father's side, might marry; if by the mother's side, they were prohibited from marrying. The same custom also probably obtained in Chaldea so early as the age in which Abraham left it; for he and Sarah his wife stood in this relation to each

* The Roman law continued the prohibition to the descendants of brothers and sisters without limits. In the Levitical and English law, there is nothing to hinder a man from marrying his *great*-niece.

other: "And yet, indeed, she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not of my mother; and she became my wife." Gen. xx. 12.

CHAPTER VI.

Polygamy.

THE equality* in the number of males and females born into the world, intimates the intention of God, that one woman should be assigned to one man: for if to one man be allowed an exclusive right to five or more women, four or more men must be deprived of the exclusive possession of any: which could never be the order intended.

It seems also a significant indication of the divine will, that he at first created only one woman to one man. Had God intended polygamy for the species, it is probable he would have begun with it; especially as, by giving to Adam more wives than one, the multiplication of the human race would have proceeded with a quicker progress.

Polygamy not only violates the constitution of nature, and the apparent design of the Deity, but produces to the parties themselves, and to the public, the following bad effects; contests and jealousies amongst the wives of the same husband; distracted affections, or the loss of all affection, in the husband himself: a voluptuousness in the rich, which dissolves the vigour of their intellectual as well as active faculties, producing that indolence and imbecility both of mind and body, which have long characterised the nations of the East; the abasement of one half of the human species, who, in countries where polygamy obtains, are degraded into mere instruments of physical pleasure to the other half; neglect of children; and the manifold, and sometimes unnatural mischiefs, which arise from a scarcity of women. To compensate for these evils, polygamy does not offer a single advantage. In the article of population, which it has been thought to promote, the community gain nothing:† for the question is not, whether one man will have more children by five or more wives than by one; but whether these five wives would not bear the same or a greater number of children to five separate husbands. And as to the care of the children, when produced, and the sending of them into the world in situations in which they may be likely to form and bring up families of their own, upon which the increase and succession of the human species in a great degree depend; this is less provided for, and less practicable, where twenty or thirty children are to be supported by the attention and fortunes of one father, than if they were divided into five or six families, to each of which were assigned the industry and inheritance of two parents.

Whether simultaneous polygamy was permitted by the law of Moses, seems doubtful;* but whether permitted or not, it was certainly practised by the Jewish patriarchs, both before that law, and under it. The permission, if there were any, might be like that of divorce, "for the hardness of their heart," in condescension to their established indulgences, rather than from the general rectitude or propriety of the thing itself. The state of manners in Judea had probably undergone a reformation in this respect before the time of Christ; for in the New Testament we meet with no trace or mention of any such practice being tolerated.

For which reason, and because it was likewise forbidden amongst the Greeks and Romans, we cannot expect to find any express law upon the subject in the christian code. The words of Christ † (Matt. xix. 9.) may be construed, by an easy implication, to prohibit polygamy: for, if whoever putteth away his wife, and *marrieth* another, committeth adultery," he who marrieth another *without* putting away the first, is no less guilty of adultery: because the adultery does not consist in the repudiation of the first wife (for, however unjust or cruel that may be, it is not adultery,) but in entering into a second marriage during the legal existence and obligation of the first. The several passages in St. Paul's writings, which speak of marriage, always suppose it to signify the union of one man with one woman. Upon this supposition he argues, Rom. vii. 1, 2, 3. "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man, as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband: so then, if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress." When the same apostle permits marriage to his Corinthian converts, (which, "for the present distress," he judges to be inconvenient,) he restrains the permission to the marriage of one husband with one wife:—"It is good for a man not to touch a woman; nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

The manners of different countries have varied in nothing more than in their domestic constitutions. Less polished and more luxurious nations have either not perceived the bad effects of polygamy, or, if they did perceive them, they who in such countries possessed the power of reforming the laws have been unwilling to resign their own gratifications. Polygamy is retained at this day among the Turks, and throughout every part of Asia in which Christianity is not professed. In Christian countries, it is universally prohibited.

* This equality is not exact. The number of male infants exceeds that of females in the proportion of nineteen to eighteen, or thereabouts: which excess provides for the greater consumption of males by war, seafaring, and other dangerous or unhealthy occupations.

† Nothing, I mean, compared with a state in which marriage is nearly universal. Where marriages are less general, and many women unfruitful from the want of husbands, polygamy might at first add a little to population, and but a little; for, as a variety of wives would be sought chiefly from temptations of voluptuousness, it would rather increase the demand for female beauty, than for the sex at large. And this *little* would soon be made less by many deductions. For, first, as none but the opulent can maintain a plurality of wives, where polygamy obtains, the rich indulge in it while the rest take up with a vague and barren incontinency. And, secondly, women would grow less jealous of their virtue, when they had nothing for which to reserve it, but a chamber in the *haram*; when their chastity was no longer to be rewarded with the rights and happiness of a wife, as enjoyed under the marriage of one woman to one man. These considerations may be added to what is mentioned in the text, concerning the easy and early settlement of children in the world.

* See Deut. xvii. 17; xxi. 15.

† I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery.

In Sweden, it is punished with death. In England, besides the nullity of the second marriage, it subjects the offender to transportation, or imprisonment and branding, for the first offence, and to capital punishment for the second. And whatever may be said in behalf of polygamy when it is authorised by the law of the land, the marriage of a second wife during the life-time of the first, in countries where such a second marriage is void, must be ranked with the most dangerous and cruel of those frauds, by which a woman is cheated out of her fortune, her person, and her happiness. The ancient Medes compelled their citizens, in one canton, to take seven wives; in another, each woman to receive five husbands: according as war had made, in one quarter of their country, an extraordinary havoc among the men, or the women had been carried away by an enemy from another. This regulation, so far as it was adapted to the proportion which subsisted between the number of males and females, was founded in the reason upon which the most approved nations of Europe proceed at present.

Cæsar found amongst the inhabitants of this island a species of polygamy, if it may be so called, which was perfectly singular. *Uxores*, says he, *habent deni duodenique inter se communes; et maxime fratres cum fratribus, parentesque cum liberis; sed si qui sint ex his nati, eorum habentur liberi, quo primum virgo quæque deducta est.*

CHAPTER VII.

Of Divorce.

By *divorce*, I mean a dissolution of the marriage-contract, by the act, and at the will, of the husband.

This power was allowed to the husband, among the Jews, the Greeks, and latter Romans; and is at this day exercised by the Turks and Persians.

The congruity of such a right with the law of nature, is the question before us.

And, in the first place, it is manifestly inconsistent with the duty which the parents owe to their children; which duty can never be so well fulfilled as by their cohabitation and united care. It is also incompatible with the right which the mother possesses, as well as the father, to the gratitude of her children, and the comfort of their society; of both which she is almost necessarily deprived, by her dismission from her husband's family.

Where this objection does not interfere, I know of no principle of the law of nature applicable to the question, beside that of general expediency.

For, if we say that arbitrary divorces are excluded by the terms of the marriage-contract, it may be answered, that the contract might be so framed as to admit of this condition.

If we argue, with some moralists, that the obligation of a contract naturally continues, so long as the purpose, which the contracting parties had in view, requires its continuance; it will be difficult to show what purpose of the contract (the care of children excepted,) should confine a man to a woman, from whom he seeks to be loose.

If we contend, with others, that a contract cannot, by the law of nature, be dissolved, unless the parties be replaced in the situation which each possessed before the contract was entered into; we shall be called upon to prove this to be an universal or indispensable property of contracts.

I confess myself unable to assign any circumstance in the marriage-contract, which essentially distinguishes it from other contracts, or which proves that it contains, what many have ascribed to it, a natural incapacity of being dissolved by the consent of the parties, at the option of one of them, or either of them. But if we trace the effects of such a rule upon the general happiness of married life, we shall perceive reasons of expediency, that abundantly justify the policy of those laws which refuse to the husband the power of divorce, or restrain it to a few extreme and specific provocations: and our principles teach us to pronounce that to be contrary to the law of nature, which can be proved to be detrimental to the common happiness of the human species.

A lawgiver, whose counsels are directed by views of general utility, and obstructed by no local impediment, would make the marriage contract indissoluble during the joint lives of the parties, for the sake of the following advantages:—

I. Because this tends to preserve peace and concord between married persons, by perpetuating their common interest, and by inducing a necessity of mutual compliance.

There is great weight and substance in both these considerations. An earlier termination of the union would produce a separate interest. The wife would naturally look forward to the dissolution of the partnership, and endeavour to draw to herself a fund against the time when she was no longer to have access to the same resources. This would beget peculation on one side, and mistrust on the other; evils which at present very little disturb the confidence of a married life. The second effect of making the union determinable only by death, is not less beneficial. It necessarily happens that adverse tempers, habits, and tastes, oftentimes meet in marriage. In which case, each party must take pains to give up what offends, and practise what may gratify the other. A man and woman in love with each other, do this insensibly; but love is neither general nor durable; and where that is wanting, no lessons of duty, no delicacy of sentiment, will go half so far with the generality of mankind and womankind as this one intelligible reflection, that they must each make the best of their bargain; and that, seeing they must either both be miserable, or both share the same happiness, neither can find their own comfort but in promoting the pleasure of the other. These compliances, though at first extorted by necessity, become in time easy and mutual; and, though less endearing than assiduities which take their rise from affection, generally procure to the married pair a repose and satisfaction sufficient for their happiness.

II. Because new objects of desire would be continually sought after, if men could, at will, be released from their subsisting engagements. Suppose the husband to have once preferred his wife to all other women, the duration of this preference cannot be trusted to. Possession makes a great difference: and there is no other security against the invitations of novelty, than the known impossibility of obtaining the object. Did the cause which brings the sexes together, hold them together by the same force with which it first attracted them to each other; or could the woman

be restored to her personal integrity, and to all the advantages of her virgin estate; the power of divorce might be deposited in the hands of the husband, with less danger of abuse or inconveniency. But constituted as mankind are, and injured as the repudiated wife generally must be, it is necessary to add a stability to the condition of married women, more secure than the continuance of their husbands' affection; and to supply to both sides, by a sense of duty and of obligation, what satiety has impaired of passion and of personal attachment. Upon the whole, the power of divorce is evidently and greatly to the disadvantage of the woman: and the only question appears to be whether the real and permanent happiness of one half of the species should be surrendered to the caprice and voluptuousness of the other?

We have considered divorces as depending upon the will of the husband, because that is the way in which they have actually obtained in many parts of the world: but the same objections apply, in a great degree, to divorces by mutual consent; especially when we consider the indelicate situation and small prospect of happiness, which remains to the party who opposed his or her dissent to the liberty and desire of the other.

The law of nature admits of an exception in favour of the injured party, in cases of adultery, of obstinate desertion, of attempts upon life, of outrageous cruelty, of incurable madness, and perhaps of personal imbecility; but by no means indulges the same privilege to mere dislike, to opposition of humours and inclination, to contrariety of taste and temper, to complaints of coldness, neglect, severity, peevishness, jealousy: not that these reasons are trivial, but because such objections may always be alleged, and are impossible by testimony to be ascertained; so that to allow implicit credit to them, and to dissolve marriages whenever either party thought fit to pretend them, would lead in its effect to all the licentiousness of arbitrary divorces.

Milton's story is well known. Upon a quarrel with his wife, he paid his addresses to another woman, and set forth a public vindication of his conduct, by attempting to prove, that confirmed dislike was as just a foundation for dissolving the marriage-contract, as adultery: to which position, and to all the arguments by which it can be supported, the above consideration affords a sufficient answer. And if a married pair, in actual and irreconcileable discord, complain that their happiness would be better consulted, by permitting them to determine a connexion which is become odious to both, it may be told them, that the same permission, as a general rule, would produce libertinism, dissension, and misery, amongst thousands, who are now virtuous, and quiet, and happy in their condition: and it ought to satisfy them to reflect, that when their happiness is sacrificed to the operation of an unrelenting rule, it is sacrificed to the happiness of the community.

The Scriptures seem to have drawn the obligation tighter than the law of nature left it. "Whosoever," saith Christ, "shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery."—Matt. xix. 9. The law of Moses, for reasons of local expediency, permitted the Jewish husband to put away his wife: but whether for every cause, or for what causes, appears to have been controverted amongst the interpreters of those times. Christ, the precepts of whose religion were calculated for more general use and observation, revokes this permission (as given to the Jews, "for the hardness of their hearts,") and promulges a law which was thenceforward to confine divorces to the single case of adultery in the wife. And I see no sufficient reason to depart from the plain and strict meaning of Christ's words. The rule was new. It both surprised and offended his disciples; yet Christ added nothing to relax or explain it.

Inferior causes may justify the separation of husband and wife, although they will not authorise such a dissolution of the marriage contract as would leave either party at liberty to marry again: for it is that liberty, in which the danger and mischief of divorces principally consist. If the care of children does not require that they should live together, and it is become, in the serious judgment of both, necessary for their mutual happiness that they should separate, let them separate by consent. Nevertheless, this necessity can hardly exist, without guilt and misconduct on one side or both. Moreover, cruelty, ill-usage, extreme violence, or moroseness of temper, or other great and continued provocations, make it lawful for the party aggrieved to withdraw from the society of the offender without his or her consent. The law which imposes the marriage-vow, whereby the parties promise to "keep to each other," or in other words, to live together, must be understood to impose it with a silent reservation of these cases; because the same law has constituted a judicial relief from the tyranny of the husband, by the divorce *a mensa et toro*, and by the provision which it makes for the separate maintenance of the injured wife. St. Paul likewise distinguishes between a wife's merely separating herself from the family of her husband, and her marrying again:—"Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she do depart, let her remain unmarried."

The law of this country, in conformity to our Saviour's injunction, confines the dissolution of the marriage-contract to the single case of adultery in the wife; and a divorce, even in that case, can only be brought about by the operation of an act of parliament, founded upon a previous sentence in the ecclesiastical court, and a verdict against the adulterer at common law: which proceedings taken together, compose as complete an investigation of the complaint as a cause can receive. It has lately been proposed to the legislature to annex a clause to these acts, restraining the offending party from marrying with the companion of her crime, who, by the course of proceeding, is always known and convicted: for there is reason to fear, that adulterous connexions are often formed with the prospect of bringing them to this conclusion; at least, when the seducer has once captivated the affection of a married woman, he may avail himself of this tempting argument to subdue her scruples, and complete his victory; and the legislature, as the business is managed at present, assists by its interposition the criminal design of the offenders, and confers a privilege where it ought to inflict a punishment. The proposal deserved an experiment: but something more penal will, I apprehend, be found necessary to check the progress of this alarming depravity.

Whether a law might not be framed directing *the fortune of the adulteress to descend as in case of her natural death;* reserving, however, a certain proportion of the produce of it, by way of annuity, for her subsistence (such annuity, in no case, to exceed a fixed sum,) and also so far suspending the estate in the hands of the heir as to preserve the inheritance to any children she might bear to a second marriage, in case there was none to succeed in the place of their mother by the first; whether, I say, such a law would not render female virtue in higher life less vincible, as well as the seducers of that virtue less urgent in their suit, we recommend to the deliberation of those who are willing to attempt the reformation of this important, but most incorrigible, class of the community. A passion for splendor, for expensive amusements and distinction, is commonly found, in that description of women who would become the objects of such a law, not less inordinate than their other appetites. A severity of the kind we propose, applies immediately to that passion. And there is no room for any complaint of injustice, since the provisions above stated, with others which might be contrived, confine the punishment, so far as it is possible, to the person of the offender; suffering the estate to remain to the heir, or within the family, of the ancestor from whom it came, or to attend the appointments of his will.

Sentences of the ecclesiastical courts, which release the parties *a vinculo matrimonii* by reason of impuberty, frigidity, consanguinity within the prohibited degrees, prior marriage, or want of the requisite consent of parents and guardians, are not dissolutions of the marriage-contract, but judicial declarations that there never was any marriage; such impediment subsisting at the time, as rendered the celebration of the marriage-rite a mere nullity. And the rite itself contains an exception of these impediments. The man and woman to be married are charged, "if they know any impediment why they may not be lawfully joined together, to confess it;" and assured "that so many as are coupled together, otherwise than God's word doth allow, are not joined together by God, neither is their matrimony lawful;" all which is intended by way of solemn notice to the parties, that the vow they are about to make will bind their consciences and authorise their cohabitation, only upon the supposition that no legal impediment exists.

CHAPTER VIII.

Marriage.

Whether it hath grown out of some tradition of the Divine appointment of marriage in the persons of our first parents, or merely from a design to impress the obligation of the marriage-contract with a solemnity suited to its importance, the marriage-rite, in almost all countries of the world, has been made a religious ceremony;* although marriage, in its own nature, and abstracted from the rules and declarations which the Jewish and Christian Scriptures deliver concerning it, be properly a civil contract, and nothing more.

With respect to one main article in matrimonial alliances, a total alteration has taken place in the fashion of the world; the wife now brings money to her husband, whereas anciently the husband paid money to the family of the wife; as was the case among the *Jewish* patriarchs, the *Greeks*, and the old inhabitants of *Germany*.* This alteration has proved of no small advantage to the female sex: for their importance in point of fortune procures to them, in modern times, that assiduity and respect, which are always wanted to compensate for the inferiority of their strength; but which their personal attractions would not always secure.

Our business is with marriage, as it is established in this country. And in treating thereof, it will be necessary to state the terms of the marriage vow, in order to discover:—

1. What duties this vow creates.
2. What a situation of mind at the time is inconsistent with it.
3. By what subsequent behaviour it is violated.

The husband promises on his part, "to love, comfort, honour, and keep, his wife:" the wife on hers, "to obey, serve, love, honour, and keep, her husband;" in every variety of health, fortune, and condition: and both stipulate "to forsake all others, and to keep only unto one another, so long as they both shall live." This promise is called the marriage vow; is witnessed before God and the congregation; accompanied with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing upon it; and attended with such circumstances of devotion and solemnity as place the obligation of it, and the guilt of violating it, nearly upon the same foundation with that of oaths.

The parties by this vow engage their personal fidelity expressly and specifically; they engage likewise to consult and promote each other's happiness; the wife, moreover, promises *obedience* to her husband. Nature may have made and left the sexes of the human species nearly equal in their faculties, and perfectly so in their rights; but to guard against those competitions which equality, or a contested superiority, is almost sure to produce, the Christian Scriptures enjoin upon the wife that obedience which she here promises, and in terms so peremptory and absolute, that it seems to extend to every thing not criminal, or not entirely inconsistent with the woman's happiness. "Let the wife," says St. Paul, "be subject to her husband in every thing."—"The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," says the same apostle, speaking of the duty of wives, "is, in the sight of God, of great price." No words ever expressed the true merit of the female character so well as these.

The condition of human life will not permit us to say, that no one can conscientiously marry, who does not prefer the person at the altar to all other men or women in the world: but we can have no difficulty in pronouncing (whether we respect the end of the institution, or the plain

* It was not, however, in Christian countries required that marriages should be celebrated in churches, till the thirteenth century of the Christian æra. Marriages in *England* during the Usurpation, were solemnized before justices of the peace: but for what purpose this novelty was introduced, except to degrade the clergy, does not appear.

* The ancient *Assyrians* sold their *beauties* by an annual auction. The prices were applied by way of portions to the more homely. By this contrivance, all of both sorts were disposed of in marriage.

terms in which the contract is conceived,) that whoever is conscious, at the time of his marriage, of such a dislike to the woman he is about to marry, or of such a subsisting attachment to some other woman, that he cannot reasonably, nor does in fact, expect ever to entertain an affection for his future wife, is guilty, when he pronounces the marriage vow, of a direct and deliberate prevarication; and that, too, aggravated by the presence of those ideas of religion, and of the Supreme Being, which the place, the ritual, and the solemnity of the occasion, cannot fail of bringing to his thoughts. The same likewise of the woman. This charge must be imputed to all who, from mercenary motives, marry the objects of their aversion and disgust; and likewise to those who desert, from any motive whatever, the object of their affection, and, without being able to subdue that affection, marry another.

The crime of falsehood is also incurred by the man who intends, at the time of his marriage, to commence, renew, or continue a personal commerce with any other woman. And the parity of reason, if a wife be capable of so much guilt, extends to her.

The marriage-vow is violated,

I. By adultery.

II. By any behaviour which, knowingly, renders the life of the other miserable; as desertion, neglect, prodigality, drunkenness, peevishness, penuriousness, jealousy, or any levity of conduct which administers occasion of jealousy.

A late regulation in the law of marriages, in this country, has made the consent of the father, if he be living, of the mother, if she survive the father, and remain unmarried, or of guardians, if both parents be dead, necessary to the marriage of a person under twenty-one years of age. By the Roman law, the consent *et avi et patris* was required so long as they lived. In France, the consent of parents is necessary to the marriage of sons, until they attain to thirty years of age; of daughters, until twenty-five. In Holland, for sons till twenty-five; for daughters till twenty. And this distinction between the sexes appears to be well founded; for a woman is usually as properly qualified for the domestic and interior duties of a wife or mother at eighteen, as a man is for the business of the world, and the more arduous care of providing for a family, at twenty-one.

The constitution also of the human species indicates the same distinction.*

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Duty of Parents.

That virtue, which confines its beneficence within the walls of a man's own house, we have been accustomed to consider as little better than a more refined selfishness; and yet it will be confessed, that the subject and matter of this class of duties are inferior to none in utility and importance: and where, it may be asked, is virtue, the most valuable, but where it does the most good? What duty is the most obligatory, but that on which the most depends? And where have we happiness and misery so much in our power, or liable to be so affected by our conduct, as in our own families? It will also be acknowledged that the good order and happiness of the world are better upholden whilst each man applies himself to his own concerns and the care of his own family, to which he is present, than if every man, from an excess of mistaken generosity, should leave his own business, to undertake his neighbour's, which he must always manage with less knowledge, conveniency, and success. If therefore, the low estimation of these virtues be well founded, it must be owing, not to their inferior importance, but to some defect or impurity in the motive. And indeed it cannot be denied, that it is in the power of *association* so to unite our children's interest with our own, as that we shall often pursue both from the same motive, place both in the same object, and with as little sense of duty in one pursuit as in the other. Where this is the case, the judgment above stated is not far from the truth. And so often as we find a solicitous care of a man's own family, in a total absence or extreme penury of every other virtue, or interfering with other duties, or directing its operation solely to the temporal happiness of the children, placing that happiness in amusement and indulgence whilst they are young, or in advancement of fortune when they grow up, there is reason to believe that this is the case. In this way, the common opinion concerning these duties may be accounted for and defended. If we look to the subject of them, we perceive them to be indispensable. If we regard the motive, we find them often not very meritorious. Wherefore, although a man seldom rises high in our esteem who has nothing to recommend him beside the care of his own family, yet we always condemn the neglect of this duty with the utmost severity; both by reason of the manifest and immediate mischief which we see arising from this neglect, and because it argues a want not only of parental affection, but of those moral principles which ought to come in aid of that affection where it is wanting. And if, on the other hand, our praise and esteem of these duties be not proportioned to the good they produce, or to the indignation with which we resent the absence of them, it is for this reason, that virtue is the most valuable, not where it produces the most good, but where it is the most wanted: which is not the case here; because its place is often supplied by instincts, or involuntary associations. Nevertheless, the offices of a parent may be discharged from a consciousness of their obligation, as well as other duties; and a sense of this obligation is sometimes necessary to assist the stimulus of parental affection; especially in stations of life in which the wants of a family cannot be supplied without the continual hard labour of the father, and without his refraining from many indulgences and recreations which unmarried men of like condition are able to purchase. Where the parental affection is sufficiently strong, or has fewer difficulties to surmount, a principle of duty may still be wanted to direct and regulate its exertions: for otherwise it is apt to spend and waste itself in a womanish fondness for the person of the child; an improvident attention to his present ease and gratification; a pernicious facility and compliance with his humours; an excessive and superfluous care to provide the externals of happiness, with little

* Cum vis prolem procreandi diutius hæreat in mare quam in fœmina populi numerus nequaquam minuetur, si serius venerem colere inceperint viri.

or no attention to the internal sources of virtue and satisfaction. Universally, wherever a parent's conduct is prompted or directed by a sense of duty, there is so much virtue.

Having premised thus much concerning the place which parental duties hold in the scale of human virtues, we proceed to state and explain the duties themselves.

When moralists tell us, that parents are bound to do *all they can* for their children, they tell us more than is true; for, at that rate, every expense which might have been spared, and every profit omitted which might have been made, would be criminal.

The duty of parents has its limits, like other duties; and admits, if not of perfect precision, at least of rules definite enough for application.

These rules may be explained under the several heads of *maintenance, education*, and *a reasonable provision for the child's happiness in respect of outward condition.*

I. *Maintenance.*

The wants of children make it necessary that some person maintain them: and, as no one has a right to burthen others by his act, it follows, that the parents are bound to undertake this charge themselves. Beside this plain inference, the affection of parents to their children, if it be instinctive, and the provision which nature has prepared in the person of the mother for the sustentation of the infant, concerning the existence and design of which there can be no doubt, are manifest indications of the Divine will.

Hence we learn the guilt of those who run away from their families, or (what is much the same,) in consequence of idleness or drunkenness, throw them upon a parish; or who leave them destitute at their death, when, by diligence and frugality, they might have laid up a provision for their support: also of those who refuse or neglect the care of their bastard offspring, abandoning them to a condition in which they must either perish or become burthensome to others; for the duty of maintenance, like the reason upon which it is founded, extends to bastards, as well as to legitimate children.

The Christian Scriptures, although they concern themselves little with maxims of prudence or economy, and much less authorize worldly-mindedness or avarice, have yet declared in explicit terms their judgment of the obligation of this duty: "If any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," (I Tim. v. 8.;) he hath disgraced the Christian profession, and fallen short in a duty which even infidels acknowledge.

II. *Education.*

Education, in the most extensive sense of the word, may comprehend every preparation that is made in our youth for the sequel of our lives; and in this sense I use it. Some such preparation is necessary for children of all conditions, because without it they must be miserable, and probably will be vicious, when they grow up, either from want of the means of subsistence, or from want of rational and inoffensive occupation. In civilized life, every thing is effected by art and skill. Whence a person who is provided with neither (and neither can be acquired without exercise and instruction) will be useless; and he that is useless, will generally be at the same time mischievous to the community. So that to send an uneducated child into the world, is injurious to the rest of mankind; it is little better than to turn out a mad dog or a wild beast into the streets.

In the inferior classes of the community, this principle condemns the neglect of parents, who do not inure their children betimes to labour and restraint, by providing them with apprenticeships, services, or other regular employment, but who suffer them to waste their youth in idleness and vagrancy, or to betake themselves to some lazy, trifling, and precarious calling: for the consequence of having thus tasted the sweets of natural liberty, at an age when their passion and relish for it are at the highest, is, that they become incapable, for the remainder of their lives, of continued industry, or of persevering attention to any thing; spend their time in a miserable struggle between the importunity of want, and the irksomeness of regular application; and are prepared to embrace every expedient, which presents a hope of supplying their necessities without confining them to the plough, the loom, the shop, or the counting-house.

In the middle orders of society, those parents are most reprehensible, who neither qualify their children for a profession, nor enable them to live without one;* and those in the highest, who, from indolence, indulgence, or avarice, omit to procure their children those liberal attainments which are necessary to make them useful in the stations to which they are destined. A man of fortune, who permits his son to consume the season of education in hunting, shooting, or in frequenting horse-races, assemblies, or other unedifying, if not vicious, diversions, defrauds the community of a benefactor, and bequeaths them a nuisance.

Some, though not the same, preparation for the sequel of their lives, is necessary for youth of every description; and therefore for bastards, as well as for children of better expectations. Consequently, they who leave the education of their bastards to chance, contenting themselves with making provision for their subsistence, desert half their duty.

III. A reasonable provision for the happiness of a child, in respect of outward condition, requires three things: a situation suited to his habits and reasonable expectations; a competent provision for the exigencies of that situation; and a probable security for his virtue.

The first two articles will vary with the condition of the parent. A situation somewhat approaching in rank and condition to the parent's own; or, where that is not practicable, similar to what other parents of like condition provide for their children; bounds the reasonable, as well as (generally speaking) the actual, expectations of the child, and therefore contains the extent of the parent's obligation.

Hence, a peasant satisfies his duty, who sends out his children, properly instructed for their occupation, to husbandry or to any branch of manufacture. Clergymen, lawyers, physicians, officers in the army or navy, gentlemen possessing moderate fortunes of inheritance, or exercising trade in a large or liberal way, are required by the same rule to provide their sons with learned professions,

* Amongst the *Athenians*, if the parent did not put his child into a way of getting a livelihood, the child was not bound to make provision for the parent when old and necessitous.

commissions in the army or navy, places in public offices, or reputable branches of merchandise. Providing a child with a situation, includes a competent supply for the expenses of that situation, until the profits of it enables the child to support himself. Noblemen and gentlemen of high rank and fortune may be bound to transmit an inheritance to the representatives of their family, sufficient for their support without the aid of a trade or profession, to which there is little hope that a youth, who has been flattered with other expectations, will apply himself with diligence or success. In these parts of the world, public opinion has assorted the members of the community into four or five general classes, each class comprising a great variety of employments and professions, the choice of which must be committed to the private discretion of the parent.* All that can be expected from parents as a *duty*, and therefore the only rule which a moralist can deliver upon the subject, is, that they endeavour to preserve their children in the *class* in which they are born, that is to say, in which others of similar expectations are accustomed to be placed; and that they be careful to confine their hopes and habits of indulgence to objects which will continue to be attainable.

It is an ill-judged thrift, in some rich parents, to bring up their sons to mean employments, for the sake of saving the charge of a more expensive education: for these sons, when they become masters of their liberty and fortune, will hardly continue in occupations by which they think themselves degraded, and are seldom qualified for any thing better.

An attention, in the first place, to the exigencies of the children's respective conditions in the world; and a regard, in the second place, to their reasonable expectations, always postponing the expectations to the exigencies when both cannot be satisfied, ought to guide parents in the disposal of their fortunes after their death. And these exigencies and expectations must be measured by the standard which custom has established: for there is a certain appearance, attendance, establishment, and mode of living, which custom has annexed to the several ranks and orders of civil life (and which compose what is called *decency*,) together with a certain society, and particular pleasures, belonging to each class: and a young person who is withheld from sharing in these for want of fortune, can scarcely be said to have a fair chance for happiness; the indignity and mortification of such a seclusion being what few tempers can bear, or bear with contentment. And as to the second consideration, of what a child may reasonably expect from his parent, he will expect what he sees all or most others in similar circumstances receive; and we can hardly call expectations unreasonable, which it is impossible to suppress.

By virtue of this rule, a parent is justified in making a difference between his children according as they stand in greater or less need of the assistance of his fortune, in consequence of the difference of their age or sex, or of the situations in which they are placed, or the various success which they have met with.

On account of the few lucrative employments which are left to the female sex, and by consequence the little opportunity they have of adding to their income, daughters ought to be the particular objects of a parent's care and foresight; and as an option of marriage, from which they can reasonably expect happiness, is not presented to every woman who deserves it, especially in times in which a licentious celibacy is in fashion with the men, a father should endeavour to enable his daughters to lead a single life with independence and decorum, even though he subtract more for that purpose from the portions of his sons than is agreeable to modern usage, or than they expect.

But when the exigencies of their several situations are provided for, and not before, a parent ought to admit the second consideration, the satisfaction of his children's expectations; and upon that principle to prefer the eldest son to the rest, and sons to daughters: which constitutes the right, and the whole right, of primogeniture, as well as the only reason for the preference of one sex to the other. The preference, indeed, of the first-born, has one public good effect, that if the estate were divided equally amongst the sons, it would probably make them all idle; whereas, by the present rule of descent, it makes only one so; which is the less evil of the two. And it must further be observed on the part of the sons, that if the rest of the community make it a rule to prefer sons to daughters, an individual of that community ought to guide himself by the same rule, upon principles of mere equality. For, as the son suffers by the rule, in the fortune he may expect in marriage, it is but reasonable that he should receive the advantage of it in his own inheritance. Indeed, whatever the rule be, as to the preference of one sex to the other, marriage restores the equality. And as money is generally more convertible to profit, and more likely to promote industry, in the hands of men than of women, the custom of this country may properly be complied with, when it does not interfere with the weightier reason explained in the last paragraph.

The point of the children's actual expectations, together with the expediency of subjecting the illicit commerce of the sexes to every discourage-

* The health and virtue of a child's future life are considerations so superior to all others, that whatever is likely to have the smallest influence upon these, deserves the parent's first attention. In respect of health, agriculture, and all active, rural, and out-of-door employments, are to be preferred to manufactures and sedentary occupations. In respect of virtue, a course of dealings in which the advantage is mutual, in which the profit on one side is connected with the benefit of the other (which is the case in trade, and all serviceable art or labour,) is more favourable to the moral character, than callings in which one man's gain is another man's loss; in which what you acquire, is acquired without equivalent, and parted with in distress; as in gaming, and whatever partakes of gaming, and in the predatory profits of war. The following distinctions also deserve notice: A business, like a retail trade, in which the profits are small and frequent, and accruing from the employment, furnishes a moderate and constant engagement of the mind, and, so far, suits better with the general disposition of mankind, than professions which are supported by fixed salaries, as stations in the church, army, navy, revenue, public offices, &c. or wherein the profits are made in large sums, by a few great concerns, or fortunate adventures; as in many branches of wholesale and foreign merchandise, in which the occupation is neither so constant, nor the activity so kept alive by immediate encouragement. For security, manual arts exceed merchandise, and such as supply the wants of mankind are better than those which minister to their pleasure. Situations which promise an early settlement in marriage, are on many accounts to be chosen before those which require a longer waiting for a larger establishment.

ment which it can receive, makes the difference between the claims of legitimate children and of bastards. But neither reason will in any case justify the leaving of bastards to the world without provision, education, or profession; or, what is more cruel, without the means of continuing in the situation to which the parent has introduced them; which last is, to leave them to inevitable misery.

After the first requisite, namely, a provision for the exigencies of his situation, is satisfied, a parent may diminish a child's portion, in order to punish any flagrant crime, or to punish contumacy and want of filial duty in instances not otherwise criminal: for a child who is conscious of bad behaviour, or of contempt of his parent's will and happiness, cannot reasonably expect the same instances of his munificence.

A child's vices may be of that sort, and his vicious habits so incorrigible, as to afford much the same reason for believing that he will waste or misemploy the fortune put into his power, as if he were mad or idiotish, in which case a parent may treat him as a madman or an idiot; that is, may deem it sufficient to provide for his support, by an annuity equal to his wants and innocent enjoyments, and which he may be restrained from alienating. This seems to be the only case in which a disinherison, nearly absolute, is justifiable.

Let not a father hope to excuse an inofficious disposition of his fortune, by alleging, that "every man may do what he will with his own." All the truth which this expression contains is, that this discretion is under no control of law; and that his will, however capricious, will be valid. This by no means absolves his conscience from the obligations of a parent, or imports that he may neglect, without injustice, the several wants and expectations of his family, in order to gratify a whim or pique, or indulge a preference founded in no reasonable distinction of merit or situation. Although in his intercourse with his family, and in the lesser endearments of domestic life, a parent may not always resist his partiality to a favourite child (which, however, should be both avoided and concealed, as oftentimes productive of lasting jealousies and discontents;) yet, when he sits down to make his will, these tendernesses must give place to more manly deliberations.

A father of a family is bound to adjust his economy with a view to these demands upon his fortune; and until a sufficiency for these ends is acquired, or in due time *probably* will be acquired (for, in human affairs, *probability* ought to content us,) frugality and exertions of industry are duties. He is also justified in the declining expensive liberality: for, to take from those who want, in order to give to those who want, adds nothing to the stock of public happiness. Thus far, therefore, and no farther, the plea of "children," of "large families," "charity begins at home," &c. is an excuse for parsimony, and an answer to those who solicit our bounty. Beyond this point, as the use of riches becomes less, the desire of *laying up* should abate proportionably. The truth is, our children gain not so much as we imagine, in the chance of this world's happiness, or even of its external prosperity, by setting out in it with large capitals. Of those who have died rich, a great part began with little. And in respect of enjoyment, there is no comparison between a fortune which a man acquires by well-applied industry, or by a series of success in his business, and one found in his possession, or received from another.

A principal part of a parent's duty is still behind, viz: the using of proper precautions and expedients, in order to form and preserve his children's virtue.

To us, who believe that, in one stage or other of our existence, virtue will conduct to happiness, and vice terminate in misery; and who observe withal, that men's virtues and vices are, to a certain degree, produced or affected by the management of their youth, and the situations in which they are placed; to all who attend to these reasons, the obligation to consult a child's virtue will appear to differ in nothing from that by which the parent is bound to provide for his maintenance or fortune. The child's interest is concerned in the one means of happiness as well as in the other; and both means are equally, and almost exclusively, in the parent's power.

For this purpose, the first point to be endeavoured after is, to impress upon children the idea of *accountableness*, that is, to accustom them to look forward to the consequences of their actions in another world; which can only be brought about by the parents visibly acting with a view to these consequences themselves. Parents, to do them justice, are seldom sparing of lessons of virtue and religion: in admonitions which cost little, and which profit less; whilst their *example* exhibits a continual contradiction of what they teach. A father, for instance, will, with much solemnity and apparent earnestness, warn his son against idleness, excess in drinking, debauchery, and extravagance, who himself loiters about all day without employment; comes home every night drunk; is made infamous in his neighbourhood by some profligate connexion; and wastes the fortune which should support, or remain a provision for his family, in riot, or luxury, or ostentation. Or he will discourse gravely before his children of the obligation and importance of revealed religion, whilst they see the most frivolous and oftentimes feigned excuses detain him from its reasonable and solemn ordinances. Or he will set before them, perhaps, the supreme and tremendous authority of Almighty God; that such a Being ought not to be named, or even thought upon, without sentiments of profound awe and veneration. This may be the lecture he delivers to his family one hour; when the next, if an occasion arise to excite his anger, his mirth or his surprise, they will hear him treat the name of the Deity with the most irreverent profanation, and sport with the terms and denunciations of the Christian religion, as if they were the language of some ridiculous and long exploded superstition. Now, even a child is not to be imposed upon by such mockery. He sees through the grimace of this counterfeited concern for virtue. He discovers that his parent is acting a part; and receives his admonitions as he would hear the same maxims from the mouth of a player. And when once this opinion has taken possession of the child's mind, it has a fatal effect upon the parent's influence in all subjects; even those, in which he himself may be sincere and convinced. Whereas a silent, but observable, regard to the duties of religion, in the parent's own behaviour, will take a sure and gradual hold of the child's disposition,

much beyond formal reproofs and chidings, which, being generally prompted by some present provocation, discover more of anger than of principle, and are always received with a temporary alienation and disgust.

A good parent's first care is, to be virtuous himself; a second, to make his virtues as easy and engaging to those about him as their nature will admit. Virtue itself offends, when coupled with forbidding manners. And some virtues may be urged to such excess, or brought forward so unseasonably, as to discourage and repel those who observe and who are acted upon by them, instead of exciting an inclination to imitate and adopt them. Young minds are particularly liable to these unfortunate impressions. For instance, if a father's economy degenerate into a minute and teasing parsimony, it is odds but that the son, who has suffered under it, sets out a sworn enemy to all rules of order and frugality. If a father's piety be morose, rigorous, and tinged with melancholy, perpetually breaking in upon the recreation of his family, and surfeiting them with the language of religion on all occasions, there is danger lest the son carry from home with him a settled prejudice against seriousness and religion, as inconsistent with every plan of a pleasureable life; and turn out, when he mixes with the world, a character of levity or dissoluteness.

Something likewise may be done towards the correcting or improving of those early inclinations which children discover, by disposing them into situations the least dangerous to their particular characters. Thus, I would make choice of a retired life for young persons addicted to licentious pleasures; of private stations for the proud and passionate; of liberal professions, and a town life, for the mercenary and sottish: and not, according to the general practice of parents, send dissolute youths into the army; penurious tempers to trade; or make a crafty lad an attorney; or flatter a vain and haughty temper with elevated names, or situations, or callings, to which the fashion of the world has annexed precedency and distinction, but in which his disposition, without at all promoting his success, will serve both to multiply and exasperate his disappointments. In the same way, that is, with a view to the particular frame and tendency of the pupil's character, I would make choice of a public or private education. The reserved, timid, and indolent, will have their faculties called forth, and their nerves invigorated, by a public education. Youths of strong spirits and passions will be safer in a private education. At our public schools, as far as I have observed, more literature is acquired, and more vice; quick parts are cultivated, slow ones are neglected. Under private tuition, a moderate proficiency in juvenile learning is seldom exceeded, but with more certainty attained.

CHAPTER X.

The Rights of Parents.

The rights of parents result from their duties. If it be the duty of a parent to educate his children, to form them for a life of usefulness and virtue, to provide for them situations needful for their subsistence, and suited to their circumstances, and to prepare them for those situations; he has a right to such authority, and in support of that authority to exercise such discipline as may be necessary for these purposes. The law of nature acknowledges no other foundation of a parent's right over his children, besides his duty towards them. (I speak now of such rights as may be enforced by coercion.) This relation confers no property in their persons, or natural dominion over them, as is commonly supposed.

Since it is, in general, necessary to determine the destination of children, before they are capable of judging of their own happiness, parents have a right to elect professions for them.

As the mother herself owes obedience to the father, her authority must submit to his. In a competition, therefore, of commands, the father is to be obeyed. In case of the death of either, the authority, as well as duty, of both parents, devolves upon the survivor.

These rights, always following the duty, belong likewise to guardians; and so much of them as is delegated by the parents to guardians, belongs to tutors, school-masters, &c.

From this principle, "that the rights of parents result from their duty," it follows, that parents have no natural right over the lives of their children, as was absurdly allowed to Roman fathers; nor any to exercise unprofitable severities; nor to command the commission of crimes: for these rights can never be wanted for the purpose of a parent's duty.

Nor, for the same reason, have parents any right to sell their children into slavery. Upon which, by the way, we may observe, that the children of slaves, are not, by the law of nature, born slaves: for, as the master's right is derived to him through the parent, it can never be greater than the parent's own.

Hence also it appears, that parents not only pervert, but exceed their just authority, when they consult their own ambition, interest, or prejudice, at the manifest expense of their children's happiness. Of which abuse of parental power, the following are instances: the shutting up of daughters and younger sons in nunneries, and monasteries, in order to preserve entire the estate and dignity of the family; or the using of any arts, either of kindness or unkindness, to induce them to make choice of this way of life themselves; or, in countries where the clergy are prohibited from marriage, putting sons into the church for the same end, who are never likely to do or receive any good in it, sufficient to compensate for this sacrifice; the urging of children to marriages from which they are averse, with the view of exalting or enriching the family, or for the sake of connecting estates, parties, or interests; or the opposing of a marriage, in which the child would probably find his happiness, from a motive of pride or avarice, of family hostility, or personal pique.

CHAPTER XI.

The Duty of Children.

The duty of children may be considered,

I. During childhood.

II. After they have attained to manhood, but continue in their father's family.

III. After they have attained to manhood, and have left their father's family.

I. *During childhood.*

Children must be supposed to have attained to some degree of discretion before they are capable of any duty. There is an interval of eight or nine years between the dawning and the maturity of reason, in which it is necessary to subject the inclination of children to many restraints, and direct their application to many employments, of the tendency and use of which they cannot judge; for which cause, the submission of children during this period must be ready and implicit, with an exception, however, of any manifest crime which may be commanded them.

II. *After they have attained to manhood, but continue in their father's family.*

If children, when they are grown up, voluntarily continue members of their father's family, they are bound, beside the general duty of gratitude to their parents, to observe such regulations of the family as the father shall appoint; contribute their labour to its support, if required; and confine themselves to such expenses as he shall allow. The obligation would be the same, if they were admitted into any other family, or received support from any other hand.

III. *After they have attained to manhood, and have left their father's family.*

In this state of the relation, the duty to parents is simply the duty of gratitude; not different *in kind*, from that which we owe to any other benefactor; *in degree*, just so much exceeding other obligations, by how much a parent has been a greater benefactor than any other friend. The services and attentions, by which filial gratitude may be testified, can be comprised within no enumeration. It will show itself in compliances with the will of the parents, however contrary to the child's own taste or judgment, provided it be neither criminal, nor totally inconsistent with his happiness; in a constant endeavour to promote their enjoyments, prevent their wishes, and soften their anxieties, in small matters as well as in great; in assisting them in their business; in contributing to their support, ease, or better accommodation, when their circumstances require it; in affording them our company, in preference to more amusing engagements; in waiting upon their sickness or decrepitude; in bearing with the infirmities of their health or temper, with the peevishness and complaints, the unfashionable, negligent, austere manners, and offensive habits, which often attend upon advanced years: for where must old age find indulgence, if it do not meet with it in the piety and partiality of children?

The most serious contentions between parents and their children are those commonly which relate to marriage, or to the choice of a profession.

A parent has, in no case, a right to destroy his child's happiness. If it be true, therefore, that there exist such personal and exclusive attachments between individuals of different sexes, that the possession of a particular man or woman in marriage be really necessary for the child's happiness; or, if it be true, that an aversion to a particular profession may be involuntary and unconquerable; then it will follow, that parents, where this is the case, ought not to urge their authority, and that the child is not bound to obey it.

The point is, to discover how far, in any particular instance, this *is* the case. Whether the fondness of lovers ever continues with such intensity, and so long, that the success of their desires constitutes, or the disappointment affects any considerable portion of their happiness, compared with that of their whole life, it is difficult to determine; but there can be no difficulty in pronouncing, that not one half of those attachments, which young people conceive with so much haste and passion, are of this sort. I believe it also to be true, that there are few aversions to a profession, which resolution, perseverance, activity in going about the duty of it, and, above all, despair of changing, will not subdue: yet there are some such. Wherefore, a child who respects his parents' judgment, and is, as he ought to be, tender of their happiness, owes, at least, so much deference to their will, as to try fairly and faithfully, in one case, whether time and absence will not cool an affection which they disapprove; and, in the other, whether a longer continuance in the profession which they have chosen for him may not reconcile him to it. The whole depends upon the experiment being made on the child's part with sincerity, and not merely with a design of compassing his purpose at last, by means of a simulated and temporary compliance. It is the nature of love and hatred, and of all violent affections, to delude the mind with a persuasion that we shall always continue to feel them as we feel them at present; we cannot conceive that they will either change or cease. Experience of similar or greater changes in ourselves, or a habit of giving credit to what our parents, or tutors, or books, teach us, may control this persuasion, otherwise it renders youth very untractable: for they see clearly and truly that it is impossible they should be happy under the circumstances proposed to them, in their present state of mind. After a sincere but ineffectual endeavour, by the child, to accommodate his inclination to his parent's pleasure, he ought not to suffer in his parent's affection, or in his fortunes. The parent, when he has reasonable proof of this should acquiesce; at all events, the child is *then* at liberty to provide for his own happiness.

Parents have no right to urge their children upon marriages to which they are averse: nor ought, in any shape, to resent the children's disobedience to such commands. This is a different case from opposing a match of inclination, because the child's misery is a much more probable consequence; it being easier to live without a person that we love, than with one whom we hate. Add to this, that compulsion in marriage necessarily leads to prevarication; as the reluctant party promises an affection, which neither exists, nor is expected to take place: and parental, like all human authority, ceases at the point where obedience becomes criminal.

In the above-mentioned, and in all contests between parents and children, it is the parent's duty to represent to the child the consequences of his conduct; and it will be found his best policy to represent them with fidelity. It is usual for parents to exaggerate these descriptions beyond probability, and by exaggeration to lose all credit with their children; thus, in a great measure, defeating their own end.

Parents are forbidden to interfere, where a trust is reposed personally in the son; and where, consequently, the son was expected, and by virtue of that expectation is obliged, to pursue his own judgment, and not that of any other: as is the case with judicial magistrates in the execution of

their office; with members of the legislature in their votes; with electors where preference is to be given to certain prescribed qualifications. The son may assist his own judgment by the advice of his father, or of any one whom he chooses to consult: but his own judgment, whether it proceed upon knowledge or authority, ought finally to determine his conduct.

The duty of children to their parents was thought worthy to be made the subject of one of the Ten Commandments; and, as such, is recognised by Christ, together with the rest of the moral precepts of the Decalogue, in various places of the Gospel.

The same divine Teacher's sentiments concerning the relief of indigent parents, appear sufficiently from that manly and deserved indignation with which he reprehended the wretched casuistry of the Jewish expositors, who, under the name of a tradition, had contrived a method of evading this duty, by converting, or pretending to convert, to the treasury of the temple, so much of their property as their distressed parent might be entitled by their law to demand.

Agreeably to this law of Nature and Christianity, children are, by the law of England, bound to support, as well their immediate parents, as their grandfather and grandmother, or remoter ancestors, who stand in need of support.

Obedience to parents is enjoined by St. Paul to the Ephesians: "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right;" and to the Colossians: "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord."*

By the Jewish law, disobedience to parents was in some extreme cases capital: Deut. xxi. 18.

BOOK IV.

DUTIES TO OURSELVES.

This division of the subject is retained merely for the sake of *method*, by which the writer and the reader are equally assisted. To the subject itself it imports nothing; for, the obligation of all duties being fundamentally the same, it matters little under what class or title any of them are considered. In strictness, there are few duties or crimes which terminate in a man's self; and so far as others are affected by their operation, they have been treated of in some article of the preceding book. We have reserved, however, to this head, the *rights of self-defence;* also the consideration of *drunkenness* and *suicide*, as offences against that care of our faculties, and preservation of our persons, which we account duties, and call *duties to ourselves.*

CHAPTER I.

The Rights of Self-Defence.

It has been asserted, that in a state of nature we might lawfully defend the most insignificant right, provided it were a perfect determinate right, by any extremities which the obstinacy of the aggressor rendered necessary. Of this I doubt; because I doubt whether the general rule be worth sustaining at such an expense; and because, apart from the general consequence of yielding to the attempt, it cannot be contended to be for the augmentation of human happiness, that one man should lose his life, or a limb, rather than another a pennyworth of his property. Nevertheless, perfect rights can only be distinguished by their value; and it is impossible to ascertain the value at which the liberty of using extreme violence begins. The person attacked, must balance, as well as he can, between the general consequence of yielding, and the particular effect of resistance.

However, this right, if it exist in a state of nature, is suspended by the establishment of civil society: because *thereby* other remedies are provided against attacks upon our property, and because it is necessary to the peace and safety of the community, that the prevention, punishment, and redress of injuries, be adjusted by public laws. Moreover, as the individual is assisted in the recovery of his right, or of a compensation for his right, by the public strength, it is no less equitable than expedient, that he should submit to public arbitration the kind, as well as the measure of the satisfaction which he is to obtain.

There is one case in which all extremities are justifiable; namely, when our life is assaulted, and it becomes necessary for our preservation to kill the assailant. This is evident in a state of nature; unless it can be shown, that we are bound to prefer the aggressor's life to our own, that is to say, to love our enemy *better* than ourselves, which can never be a debt of justice, nor any where appears to be a duty of charity. Nor is the case altered by our living in civil society; because, by the supposition, the laws of society cannot interpose to protect us, nor, by the nature of the case, compel restitution. This liberty is restrained to cases in which no other probable means of preserving our life remain, as flight, calling for assistance, disarming the adversary, &c. The rule holds, whether the danger proceed from a voluntary attack, as by an enemy, robber, or assassin; or from an involuntary one, as by a madman, or person sinking in the water, and dragging us after him; or where two persons are reduced to a situation in which one or both of them must perish: as in a shipwreck, where two seize upon a plank, which will support only one: although, to say the truth, these extreme cases, which happen seldom, and hardly, when they do happen, admit of moral agency, are scarcely worth mentioning, much less discussing at length.

The instance which approaches the nearest to the preservation of life, and which seems to justify the same extremities, is the defence of chastity.

In all other cases, it appears to me the safest to consider the taking away of life as authorised by the law of the land; and the person who takes it away, as in the situation of a minister or executioner of the law.

In which view, homicide, in *England*, is justifiable:

1. To prevent the commission of a crime, which, when committed, would be punishable with death. Thus, it is lawful to shoot a highwayman, or one attempting to break into a house by night; but not so if the attempt be made in the day-time;

* Upon which two phrases, "this is right," and, "for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord," being used by St. Paul in a sense perfectly parallel, we may observe, that moral rectitude, and conformity to the Divine will, were in his apprehension the same.

which particular distinction, by a consent of legislation that is remarkable, obtained also in the Jewish law, as well as in the laws both of Greece and Rome.

2. In necessary endeavours to carry the law into execution, as in suppressing riots, apprehending malefactors, preventing escapes, &c.

I do not know that the law holds forth its authority to any cases besides those which fall within one or other of the above descriptions; or, that, after the exception of immediate danger to life or chastity, the destruction of a human being can be innocent without an authority.

The rights of war are not here taken into the account.

CHAPTER II.

Drunkenness.

Drunkenness is either actual or habitual; just as it is one thing to be drunk, and another to be a drunkard. What we shall deliver upon the subject must principally be understood of a *habit* of intemperance; although *part* of the guilt and danger described, may be applicable to casual excesses; and *all* of it in a certain degree, forasmuch as every habit is only a repetition of single instances.

The mischief of drunkenness, from which we are to compute the guilt of it, consists in following the bad effects:

1. It betrays most constitutions either to extravagances of anger, or sins of lewdness.

2. It disqualifies men for the duties of their station, both by the temporary disorder of their faculties, and at length by a constant incapacity and stupefaction.

3. It is attended with expenses, which can often be ill spared.

4. It is sure to occasion uneasiness to the family of the drunkard.

5. It shortens life.

To these consequences of drunkenness must be added the peculiar danger and mischief of the *example*. Drunkenness is a social festive vice; apt, beyond any vice that can be mentioned, to draw in others by the example. The drinker collects his circle; the circle naturally spreads; of those who are drawn within it, many become the corrupters and centres of sets and circles of their own; every one countenancing, and perhaps emulating the rest, till a whole neighbourhood be infected from the contagion of a single example. This account is confirmed by what we often observe of drunkenness, that it is a *local* vice; found to prevail in certain countries, in certain districts of a country, or in particular towns, without any reason to be given for the fashion, but that it had been introduced by some popular examples. With this observation upon the spreading quality of drunkenness, let us connect a remark which belongs to the several evil effects above recited. The consequences of a vice, like the symptoms of a disease, though they be all enumerated in the description, seldom all meet in the same subject. In the instance under consideration, the age and temperature of one drunkard may have little to fear from inflammations of lust or anger; the fortune of a second may not be injured by the expense; a third may have no family to be disquieted by his irregularities; and a fourth may possess a constitution fortified against the poison of strong liquors. But if, as we always ought to do, we comprehend within the consequences of our conduct the mischief and tendency of the example, the above circumstances, however fortunate for the individual, will be found to vary the guilt of his intemperance less, probably, than he supposes. The moralist may expostulate with him thus: Although the waste of time and of money be of small importance to you, it may be of the utmost to some one or other whom your society corrupts. Repeated or long-continued excesses, which hurt not *your* health, may be fatal to your companion. Although you have neither wife or child, nor parent, to lament your absence from home, or expect your return to it with terror: other families, in which husbands and fathers have been invited to share in your ebriety, or encouraged to imitate it, may justly lay their misery or ruin at your door. This will hold good whether the person seduced be seduced immediately by you, or the vice be propagated from you to him through several intermediate examples. All these considerations it is necessary to assemble, to judge truly of a vice which usually meets with milder names and more indulgence than it deserves.

I omit those outrages upon one another, and upon the peace and safety of the neighbourhood, in which drunken revels often end; and also those deleterious and maniacal effects which strong liquors produce upon particular constitutions: because, in general propositions concerning drunkenness, no consequences should be included, but what are constant enough to be generally expected.

Drunkenness is repeatedly forbidden by St. Paul: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess." "Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness." "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor *drunkards*, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Ephes. v. 18; Romans xiii. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. The same apostle likewise condemns drunkenness, as peculiarly inconsistent with the Christian profession:—"They that be drunken, are drunken in the night: but let us, who are of the day, be sober." 1 Thess. v. 7, 8. We are not concerned with the argument: the words amount to a prohibition of drunkenness, and the authority is conclusive.

It is a question of some importance, how far drunkenness is an excuse for the crimes which the drunken person commits.

In the solution of this question, we will first suppose the drunken person to be altogether deprived of moral agency, that is to say, of all reflection and foresight. In this condition, it is evident that he is no more capable of guilt than a madman; although, like him, he may be extremely mischievous. The only guilt with which he is chargeable, was incurred at the time when he voluntarily brought himself into this situation. And as every man is responsible for the consequences which he foresaw, or might have foreseen, and for no other, this guilt will be in proportion to the probability of such consequences ensuing. From which principle results the following rule, viz. that the guilt of any action in a drunken man, bears the same proportion to the guilt of the like action in a sober man, that the probability of its being the consequence of drunkenness, bears to absolute

certainty. By virtue of this rule, those vices which are the *known* effects of drunkenness, either in general or upon particular constitutions, are in all, or in men of such constitutions, nearly as criminal as if committed with all their faculties and senses about them.

If the privation of reason be only partial, the guilt will be of a mixed nature. For so much of his self-government as the drunkard retains, he is as responsible then as at any other time. He is entitled to no abatement beyond the strict proportion in which his moral faculties are impaired. Now I call the guilt of the crime, if a sober man had committed it, the *whole* guilt. A person in the condition we describe, incurs part of this at the instant of perpetration; and by bringing himself into such a condition, he incurred that fraction of the remaining part, which the danger of this consequence was of an integral certainty. For the sake of illustration, we are at liberty to suppose, that a man loses half his moral faculties by drunkenness; this leaving him but half his responsibility, he incurs, when he commits the action, half of the whole guilt. We will also suppose that it was known beforehand, that it was an even chance, or half a certainty, that this crime would follow his getting drunk. This makes him chargeable with half of the remainder; so that altogether, he is responsible in three-fourths of the guilt which a sober man would have incurred by the same action.

I do not mean that any real case can be reduced to numbers, or the calculation be ever made with arithmetical precision; but these are the principles, and this the rule by which our general admeasurement of the guilt of such offences should be regulated.

The appetite for intoxicating liquors appears to me to be almost always *acquired*. One proof of which is, that it is apt to return only at particular times and places: as after dinner, in the evening, on the market-day, at the market-town, in such a company, at such a tavern. And this may be the reason that, if a habit of drunkenness be ever overcome, it is upon some change of place, situation, company, or profession. A man sunk deep in a habit of drunkenness will, upon such occasions as these, when he finds himself loosened from the associations which held him fast, sometimes make a plunge, and get out. In a matter of so great importance, it is well worth while, where it is in any degree practicable, to change our habitation and society, for the sake of the experiment.

Habits of drunkenness commonly take their rise either from a fondness for, and connexion with, some company, or some companion, already addicted to this practice; which affords an almost irresistible invitation to take a share in the indulgences which those about us are enjoying with so much apparent relish and delight; or from want of regular employment, which is sure to let in many superfluous cravings and customs, and often this among the rest; or, lastly, from grief, or fatigue, both which strongly solicit that relief which inebriating liquors administer, and also furnish a specious excuse for complying with the inclination. But the habit, when once set in, is continued by different motives from those to which it owes its origin. Persons addicted to excessive drinking, suffer in the intervals of sobriety, and near the return of their accustomed indulgence, a faintness and oppression *circa præcordia*, which it exceeds the ordinary patience of human nature to endure. This is usually relieved for a short time, by a repetition of the same excess; and to this relief, as to the removal of every long continued pain, they who have once experienced it, are urged almost beyond the power of resistance. This is not all: as the liquor loses its *stimulus*, the dose must be increased, to reach the same pitch of elevation or ease; which increase proportionably accelerates the progress of all the maladies that drunkenness brings on. Whoever reflects upon the violence of the craving in the advanced stages of the habit, and the fatal termination to which the gratification of it leads, will, the moment he perceives in himself the first symptoms of a growing inclination to intemperance, collect his resolution to this point; or (what perhaps, he will find his best security,) arm himself with some peremptory rule, as to the times and quantity of his indulgences. I own myself a friend to the laying down of rules to ourselves of this sort, and rigidly abiding by them. They may be exclaimed against as stiff, but they are often salutary. Indefinite resolutions of abstemiousness are apt to yield to *extraordinary* occasions; and *extraordinary* occasions to occur perpetually. Whereas, the stricter the rule is, the more tenacious we grow of it; and many a man will abstain rather than break his rule, who would not easily be brought to exercise the same mortification from higher motives. Not to mention, that when our rule is once known, we are provided with an answer to every importunity.

There is a difference, no doubt, between convivial intemperance, and that solitary sottishness which waits neither for company nor invitation. But the one, I am afraid, commonly ends in the other: and this last, in the basest degradation to which the faculties and dignity of human nature can be reduced.

CHAPTER III.

Suicide.

THERE is no subject in morality in which the consideration of *general consequences* is more necessary than in this of Suicide. Particular and extreme cases of suicide may be imagined, and may arise, of which it would be difficult to assign the particular mischief, or from that consideration alone to demonstrate the guilt; and these cases have been the chief occasion of confusion and doubtfulness in the question: albeit, this is no more than what is sometimes true of the most acknowledged vices. I could propose many possible cases even of murder, which, if they were detached from the general rule, and governed by their own particular consequences alone, it would be no easy undertaking to prove criminal.

The true question in this argument is no other than this: May every man who chooses to destroy his life, innocently do so? Limit and distinguish the subject as you can, it will come at last to this question.

For, shall we say, that we are then at liberty to commit suicide when we find our continuance in life become useless to mankind? Any one who pleases, may make himself useless; and melancholy minds are prone to think themselves use-

less, when they really are not so. Supposing a law were promulgated, allowing each private person to destroy every man he met, whose longer continuance in the world he judged to be *useless;* who would not condemn the latitude of such a rule? who does not perceive that it amounts to a permission to commit murder at pleasure? A similar rule, regulating the right over our own lives, would be capable of the same extension. Beside which, no one is *useless* for the purpose of this plea, but he who has lost every capacity and opportunity of being useful, together with the possibility of recovering any degree of either; which is a state of such complete destitution and despair, as cannot, I believe, be predicated of any man living.

Or rather, shall we say that to depart voluntarily out of life, is lawful for those alone who leave none to lament their death? If this consideration is to be taken into the account at all, the subject of debate will be, not whether there are any to sorrow for us, but whether their sorrow for our death will exceed that which we should suffer by continuing to live. Now this is a comparison of things so indeterminate in their nature, capable of so different a judgment, and concerning which the judgment will differ so much according to the state of the spirits, or the pressure of any present anxiety, that it would vary little, in hypochondriacal constitutions, from an unqualified license to commit suicide, whenever the distresses which men felt, or fancied, rose high enough to overcome the pain and dread of death. Men are never tempted to destroy themselves but when under the oppression of some grievous uneasiness: the restrictions of the rule therefore ought to apply to these cases. But what effect can we look for from a rule which proposes to weigh our pain against that of another; the misery that is felt, against that which is only conceived; and in so corrupt a balance as the party's own distempered imagination?

In like manner, whatever other rule you assign, it will ultimately bring us to an indiscriminate toleration of suicide, in all cases in which there is danger of its being committed. It remains, therefore, to inquire what would be the effect of such a toleration: evidently, the loss of many lives to the community, of which some might be useful or important; the affliction of *many* families, and the consternation of *all:* for mankind must live in continual alarm for the fate of their friends and dearest relations, when the restraints of religion and morality are withdrawn; when every disgust which is powerful enough to tempt men to suicide, shall be deemed sufficient to justify it; and when the follies and vices, as well as the inevitable calamities, of human life, so often make existence a burthen.

A second consideration, and perfectly distinct from the former, is this: by continuing in the world, and in the exercise of those virtues which remain within our power, we retain the opportunity of meliorating our condition in a future state. This argument, it is true, does not in strictness prove suicide to be a crime; but if it supply a motive to dissuade us from committing it, it amounts to much the same thing. Now there is no condition in human life which is not capable of some virtue, active or passive. Even piety and resignation under the sufferings to which we are called, testify a trust and acquiescence in the Divine counsels, more acceptable perhaps, than the most prostrate devotion; afford an edifying example to all who observe them; and may hope for a recompense among the most arduous of human virtues. These qualities are always in the power of the miserable; indeed of none but the miserable.

The two considerations above stated, belong to all cases of suicide whatever. Beside which general reasons, each case will be aggravated by its own proper and particular consequences; by the duties that are deserted; by the claims that are defrauded; by the loss, affliction, or disgrace, which our death, or the manner of it, causes our family, kindred, or friends; by the occasion we give to many to suspect the sincerity of our moral and religious professions, and, together with ours, those of all others; by the reproach we draw upon our order, calling, or sect; in a word, by a great variety of evil consequences attending upon peculiar situations, with some or other of which every actual case of suicide is chargeable.

I refrain from the common topics of "deserting our post," "throwing up our trust," "rushing uncalled into the presence of our Maker," with some others of the same sort, not because they are *common,* (for that rather affords a presumption in their favour,) but because I do not perceive in them much argument to which an answer may not easily be given.

Hitherto we have pursued upon the subject the light of nature alone; taking however into the account, the expectation of a future existence, without which our reasoning upon this, as indeed all reasoning upon moral questions, is vain: we proceed to inquire, whether any thing is to be met with in Scripture, which may add to the probability of the conclusions we have been endeavouring to support. And here I acknowledge, that there is to be found neither any express determination of the question, nor sufficient evidence to prove that the case of suicide was in the contemplation of the law which prohibited murder. Any inference, therefore, which we deduce from Scripture, can be sustained only by construction and implication: that is to say, although they who were authorised to instruct mankind, have not decided a question which never, so far as appears to us, came before them; yet I think, they have left enough to constitute a presumption how they would have decided it, had it been proposed or thought of.

What occurs to this purpose, is contained in the following observations:

1. Human life is spoken of as a *term* assigned or prescribed to us: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us."—"I have finished my course."—"That I may finish my course with joy."—"Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."—These expressions appear to me inconsistent with the opinion, that we are at liberty to determine the duration of our lives for ourselves. If this were the case, with what propriety could life be called *a race that is set before us;* or, which is the same thing, "*our course;*" that is, the course set out or appointed to us? The remaining quotation is equally strong:—"That after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." The most natural meaning that can be given to the words, "after ye have done the will of God," is, after ye have discharged the duties of life so long as God is pleased to continue

you in it. According to which interpretation, the text militates strongly against suicide: and they who reject this paraphrase, will please to propose a better.

2. There is not one quality which Christ and his apostles inculcate upon their followers so often, or so earnestly, as that of patience under affliction. Now this virtue would have been in a great measure superseded, and the exhortations to it might have been spared, if the disciples of his religion had been at liberty to quit the world as soon as they grew weary of the ill usage which they received in it.—When the evils of life pressed sore, they were to look forward to a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" they were to receive them, "as chastenings of the Lord," as intimations of his care and love: by these and the like reflections they were to support and improve themselves under their sufferings; but not a hint has any where escaped of seeking relief in a voluntary death. The following text in particular strongly combats all impatience of distress, of which the greatest is that which prompts to acts of suicide:—"Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." I would offer my comment upon this passage, in these two queries: first, Whether a Christian convert, who had been impelled by the continuance and urgency of his sufferings to destroy his own life, would not have been thought by the author of this text "to have been weary," to have "fainted in his mind," to have fallen off from that example which is here proposed to the meditation of Christians in distress? And yet, secondly, Whether such an act would not have been attended with all the circumstances of mitigation which can excuse or extenuate suicide at this day?

3. The *conduct* of the apostles, and of the Christains of the apostolic age, affords no obscure indication of their sentiments upon this point. They lived, we are sure, in a confirmed persuasion of the existence, as well as of the happiness, of a future state. They experienced in this world every extremity of external injury and distress. To die, was gain. The change which death brought with it was, in their expectation, infinitely beneficial. Yet it never, that we can find, entered into the intention of one of them to hasten this change by an act of suicide; from which it is difficult to say what motive could have so universally withheld them, except an apprehension of some unlawfulness in the expedient.

Having stated what we have been able to collect in opposition to the lawfulness of suicide, by way of direct proof, it seems unnecessary to open a separate controversy with all the arguments which are made use of to defend it; which would only lead us into a repetition of what has been offered already. The following argument, however, being somewhat more artificial and imposing than the rest, as well as distinct from the general consideration of the subject, cannot so properly be passed over. If we deny to the individual a right over his own life, it seems impossible, it is said, to reconcile with the law of nature that right which the state claims and exercises over the lives of its subjects, when it ordains or inflicts capital punishments. For this right, like all other just authority in the state, can only be derived from the compact and virtual consent of the citizens which compose the state; and it seems self-evident, if any principle in morality be so, that no one, by his consent, can transfer to another a right which he does not possess himself. It will be equally difficult to account for the power of the state to commit its subjects to the dangers of war, and to expose their lives without scruple in the field of battle; especially in offensive hostilities, in which the privileges of self-defence cannot be pleaded with any appearance of truth: and still more difficult to explain, how in such, or in any circumstances, prodigality of life can be a virtue, if the preservation of it be a duty of our nature.

This whole reasoning sets out from one error, namely, that the state acquires its right over the life of the subject from the subject's own consent, as a part of what originally and personally belonged to himself, and which he has made over to his governors. The truth is, the state derives this right neither from the consent of the subject, nor through the medium of that consent; but, as I may say, immediately from the donation of the Deity. Finding that such a power in the sovereign of the community is expedient, if not necessary, for the community itself, it is justly presumed to be the will of God, that the sovereign should possess and exercise it. It is this *presumption* which constitutes the right; it is the same indeed which constitutes every other: and if there were the like reasons to authorise the presumption in the case of private persons, suicide would be as justifiable as war, or capital executions. But until it can be shown that the power over human life may be converted to the same advantage in the hands of individuals over their own, as in those of the state over the lives of its subjects, and that it may be entrusted with equal safety to both, there is no room for arguing, from the existence of such a right in the latter, to the toleration of it in the former.

BOOK V.

DUTIES TOWARDS GOD.

CHAPTER I.

Division of these Duties.

In one sense, every duty is a duty towards God, since it is his will which makes it a duty: but there are some duties of which God is the object, as well as the author; and these are peculiarly, and in a more appropriated sense, called *duties towards God.*

That silent piety, which consists in a habit of tracing out the Creator's wisdom and goodness in the objects around us, or in the history of his dispensations; of referring the blessings we enjoy to his bounty, and of resorting in our distresses to his succour; may possibly be more acceptable to the Deity than any visible expressions of devotion whatever. Yet these latter, (which, although they may be excelled, are not superseded, by the former,) compose the only part of the subject which admits of direction or disquisition from a moralist.

Our duty towards God, so far as it is external, is divided into *worship* and *reverence.* God is the immediate object of both; and the difference

between them is, that the one consists in action, the other in forbearance. When we go to church on the Lord's day, led thither by a sense of duty towards God, we perform an act of worship: when, from the same motive, we rest in a journey upon that day, we discharge a duty of reverence.

Divine worship is made up of adoration, thanksgiving, and prayer.—But, as what we have to offer concerning the two former may be observed of prayer, we shall make that the title of the following chapters, and the direct subject of our consideration.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Duty and of the Efficacy of Prayer, so far as the same appear from the Light of Nature.

When one man desires to obtain any thing of another, he betakes himself to entreaty; and this may be observed of mankind in all ages and countries of the world. Now, what is universal, may be called natural; and it seems probable that God, as our supreme governor, should expect that towards himself, which, by a natural impulse, or by the irresistible order of our constitution, he has prompted us to pay to every other being on whom we depend.

The same may be said of thanksgiving.

Prayer likewise is necessary to keep up in the minds of mankind a sense of God's agency in the universe, and of their own dependency upon him.

Yet, after all, the duty of prayer depends upon its efficacy: for I confess myself unable to conceive, how any man can pray, or be obliged to pray, who expects nothing from his prayers; but who is persuaded, at the time he utters his request, that it cannot possibly produce the smallest impression upon the being to whom it is addressed, or advantage to himself. Now, the efficacy of prayer imports, that we obtain something in consequence of praying, which we should not have received without prayer; against all expectation of which, the following objection has been often and seriously alleged: "If it be most agreeable to perfect wisdom and justice that we should receive what we desire, God, as perfectly wise and just, will give it to us without asking; if it be not agreeable to these attributes of his nature, our entreaties cannot move him to give it us, and it were impious to expect that they should." In fewer words, thus: "If what we request be fit for us, we shall have it without praying; if it be not fit for us, we cannot obtain it by praying." This objection admits but of one answer, namely, that it may be agreeable to perfect wisdom to grant that to our prayers, which it would not have been agreeable to the same wisdom to have given us without praying for. But what virtue, you will ask, is there in prayer, which should make a favour consistent with wisdom, which would not have been so without it? To this question, which contains the whole difficulty attending the subject, the following possibilities are offered in reply:

1. A favour granted to prayer may be more apt, on that very account, to produce good effects upon the person obliged. It may hold in the Divine bounty, what experience has raised into a proverb in the collation of human benefits, that what is obtained without asking, is oftentimes received without gratitude.

2. It may be consistent with the wisdom of the Deity to withhold his favours till they be asked for, as an expedient to encourage devotion in his rational creation, in order thereby to keep up and circulate a knowledge and sense of their dependency upon *him*.

3. Prayer has a natural tendency to amend the petitioner himself; and thus to bring him within the rules which the wisdom of the Deity has prescribed to the dispensation of his favours.

If these, or any other assignable suppositions, serve to remove the apparent repugnancy between the success of prayer and the character of the Deity, it is enough; for the question with the petitioner is not from which, out of many motives, God may grant his petition, or in what particular manner he is moved by the supplications of his creatures; but whether it be consistent with his nature to be moved at all, and whether there be any conceivable motives which may dispose the Divine Will to grant the petitioner what he wants, in consequence of his praying for it. It is sufficient for the petitioner, that he gain his end. It is not necessary to devotion, perhaps not very consistent with it, that the circuit of causes, by which his prayers prevail, should be known to the petitioner, much less that they should be present to his imagination at the time. All that is necessary is, that there be no impossibility apprehended in the matter.

Thus much must be conceded to the objection: that prayer cannot reasonably be offered to God with all the same views, with which we oftentimes address our entreaties to men (views which are not commonly or easily separated from it,) viz. to inform them of our wants and desires; to tease them out by importunity; to work upon their indolence or compassion, in order to persuade them to do what they ought to have done before, or ought not to do at all.

But suppose there existed a prince, who was known by his subjects to act, of his own accord, always and invariably for the best; the situation of a petitioner, who solicited a favour or pardon from such a prince, would sufficiently resemble ours: and the question with him, as with us, would be, whether, the character of the prince being considered, there remained any chance that he should obtain from him by prayer, what he would not have received without it. I do not conceive that the character of such a prince would necessarily exclude the effect of his subject's prayers; for when that prince reflected that the earnestness and humility of the supplication had generated in the suppliant a frame of mind, upon which the pardon or favour asked would produce a permanent and active sense of gratitude; that the granting of it to prayer would put others upon praying to him, and by that means preserve the the love and submission of his subjects, upon which love and submission their own happiness, as well as his glory, depended; that, beside that the memory of the particular kindness would be heightened and prolonged by the anxiety with which it had been sued for, prayer had in other respects so disposed and prepared the mind of the petitioner, as to render capable of future services him who before was unqualified for any: might not that prince, I say, although he proceeded upon no other considerations than the strict rectitude and expediency of the measure, grant a favour or pardon to *this man*, which he did not grant to

another, who was too proud, too lazy, or too busy, too indifferent whether he received it or not, or too insensible of the sovereign's absolute power to give or to withhold it, ever to ask for it? or even to the *philosopher*, who, from an opinion of the fruitlessness of all addresses to a prince of the character which he had formed to himself, refused in his own example, and discouraged in others, all outward returns of gratitude, acknowledgment of duty, or application to the sovereign's mercy or bounty; the disuse of which, (seeing affections do not long subsist which are never expressed) was followed by a decay of loyalty and zeal amongst his subjects, and threatened to end in a forgetfulness of his rights, and a contempt of his authority? These, together with other assignable considerations, and some perhaps inscrutable, and even inconceivable, by the persons upon whom his will was to be exercised, might pass in the mind of the prince, and move his counsels; whilst nothing, in the mean time, dwelt in the petitioner's thoughts, but a sense of his own grief and wants; of the power and goodness from which alone he was to look for relief; and of his obligation to endeavour, by future obedience, to render that person propitious to his happiness, in whose hands, and at the disposal of whose mercy, he found himself to be.

The objection to prayer supposes, that a perfectly wise being must necessarily be inexorable: but where is the proof, that *inexorability* is any part of perfect wisdom; especially of that wisdom which is explained to consist in bringing about the most beneficial ends by the wisest means?

The objection likewise assumes another principle, which is attended with considerable difficulty and obscurity, namely, that upon every occasion there is *one*, and only *one*, mode of acting *for the best*; and that the Divine Will is necessarily determined and confined to that mode: both which positions presume a knowledge of universal nature, much beyond what we are capable of attaining. Indeed, when we apply to the Divine Nature such expressions as these, "God *must* always do what is right," "God *cannot*, from the moral perfection and necessity of his nature, act otherwise than for the best," we ought to apply them with much indeterminateness and reserve; or rather, we ought to confess, that there is something in the subject out of the reach of our apprehension; for, in our apprehension, to be under a necessity of acting according to any rule, is inconsistent with free agency; and it makes no difference which we can understand, whether the necessity be internal or external, or that the rule is the rule of perfect rectitude.

But efficacy is ascribed to prayer without the proof, we are told, which can alone in such a subject produce conviction,—the confirmation of experience. Concerning the appeal to experience, I shall content myself with this remark, that if prayer were suffered to disturb the order of second causes appointed in the universe, too much, or to produce its effects with the same regularity that they do, it would introduce a change into human affairs, which, in some important respects, would be evidently for the worse. Who, for example, would labour, if his necessities could be supplied with equal certainty by prayer? How few would contain within any bounds of moderation those passions and pleasures, which at present are checked only by disease, or the dread of it, if prayer would infallibly restore health? In short, if the efficacy of prayer were so constant and observable as to be relied upon *beforehand*, it is easy to foresee that the conduct of mankind would, in proportion to that reliance, become careless and disorderly. It is possible, in the nature of things, that our prayers may, in many instances, be efficacious, and yet our experience of their efficacy be dubious and obscure. Therefore, if the light of nature instruct us by any other arguments to hope for effect from prayer; still more, if the Scriptures authorise these hopes by promises of acceptance; it seems not a sufficient reason for calling in question the reality of such effects, that our observations of them are ambiguous; especially since it appears probable, that this very ambiguity is necessary to the happiness and safety of human life.

But some, whose objections do not exclude all prayer, are offended with the mode of prayer in use amongst us, and with many of the subjects which are almost universally introduced into public worship, and recommended to private devotion. To pray for particular favours by name, is to dictate, it has been said, to Divine wisdom and goodness: to intercede for others, especially for whole nations and empires, is still worse; it is to presume that we possess such an interest with the Deity, as to be able, by our applications, to bend the most important of his counsels; and that the happiness of others, and even the prosperity of communities, is to depend upon this interest, and upon our choice. Now, how unequal soever our knowledge of the Divine economy may be to the solution of this difficulty, which requires perhaps a comprehension of the entire plan, and of all the ends of God's moral government, to explain satisfactorily, we can understand one thing concerning it: that it is, after all, nothing more than the making of one man the instrument of happiness and misery to another; which is perfectly of a piece with the course and order that obtain, and which we must believe were intended to obtain, in human affairs. Why may we not be assisted by the prayers of other men, who are beholden for our support to their labour? Why may not our happiness be made in some cases to depend upon the intercession, as it certainly does in many upon the good offices, of our neighbours? The happiness and misery of great numbers we see oftentimes at the disposal of one man's choice, or liable to be much affected by his conduct: what greater difficulty is there in supposing, that the prayers of an individual may avert a calamity from multitudes, or be accepted to the benefit of whole communities?

CHAPTER III.

Of the Duty and Efficacy of Prayer as Represented in Scripture.

The reader will have observed, that the reflections stated in the preceding chapter, whatever truth and weight they may be allowed to contain, rise many of them no higher than to negative arguments in favour of the propriety of addressing prayer to God. To prove that the efficacy of prayers is not inconsistent with the attributes of the Deity, does not prove that prayers are actually efficacious: and in the want of that unequivocal testimony, which experience alone could afford to this point, (but which we do not possess, and have

seen good reason why we are not to expect,) the light of nature leaves us to controverted probabilities, drawn from the impulse by which mankind have been almost universally prompted to devotion, and from some beneficial purposes, which, it is conceived, may be better answered by the audience of prayer than by any other mode of communicating the same blessings. The revelations which we deem authentic, completely supply this defect of natural religion. They require prayer to God as a duty; and they contain positive assurance of its efficacy and acceptance. We could have no reasonable motive for the exercise of prayer, without believing that it may avail to the relief of our wants. This belief can only be founded, either in a sensible experience of the effect of prayer, or in promises of acceptance signified by Divine authority. Our knowledge would have come to us in the former way, less capable indeed of doubt, but subjected to the abuses and inconveniences briefly described above; in the latter way, that is, by authorized significations of God's general disposition to hear and answer the devout supplications of his creatures, we are encouraged to pray, but not place such a dependence upon prayer as might relax other obligations, or confound the order of events and of human expectations.

The Scriptures not only affirm the propriety of prayer in general, but furnish precepts or examples which justify some topics and some modes of prayer that have been thought exceptionable. And as the whole subject rests so much upon the foundation of Scripture, I shall put down at length texts applicable to the five following heads: to the duty and efficacy of prayer in general; of prayer for particular favours by name; for public national blessings; of intercession for others; of the repetition of unsuccessful prayers.

1. Texts enjoying prayer in general: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find:—If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?"—"Watch ye, therefore, and *pray always*, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."—"Serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, *continuing instant in prayer*."—"Be careful for nothing, but in every thing, *by prayer and supplication*, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."—"I will, therefore, that men *pray every where*, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting."—"*Pray without ceasing*." Matt. vii. 7. 11; Luke xxi. 36; Rom. xii. 12; Phil. iv. 6; 1 Thess. v. 17; 1 Tim. ii. 8. Add to these, that Christ's reproof of the ostentation and prolixity of pharisaical prayers, and his recommendation to his disciples, of retirement and simplicity in theirs, together with his dictating a particular form of prayer, all presuppose prayer to be an acceptable and availing service.

2. Examples of prayer for particular favours by name: "For this thing" (to wit, some bodily infirmity, which he calls 'a thorn given him in the flesh') "I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me."—"Night and day praying exceedingly, that we *might see your face*, and perfect that which is lacking in your faith." 2 Cor. xii. 8; 1 Thess. iii. 10.

3. Directions to pray for national or public blessings: "*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*."—"Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field."—"I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." Psalm cxxii. 6; Zech. x. 1; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, 3.

4. Examples of intercession, and exhortations to intercede for others:—"And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people? Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."—"Peter, therefore, was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God *for him*."—"For God is my witness, that without ceasing *I make mention of you always in my prayers*."—"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me, in your *prayers for me*."—"Confess your faults one to another, and *pray one for another*, that ye may be healed: the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Exod. xxxii. 11; Acts xii. 5; Rom. i. 9. xv. 30; James v. 16.

5. Declarations and examples authorising the repetition of unsuccessful prayer: "And he spake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."—"And he left them, and went away again, and prayed *the third time, saying the same words*."—"For this thing I besought the Lord *thrice*, that it might depart from me." Luke xviii. 1; Matt. xxvi. 44; 2 Cor. xii. 8.*

CHAPTER IV.

Of Private Prayer, Family Prayer, and Public Worship.

Concerning these three descriptions of devotion, it is first of all to be observed, that each has its separate and peculiar use; and therefore, that the exercise of one species of worship, however regular it be, does not supersede, or dispense with, the obligation of either of the other two.

1. *Private Prayer* is recommended for the sake of the following advantages:

Private wants cannot always be made the subject of public prayer: but whatever reason there is for praying at all, there is the same for making the sore and grief of each man's own heart the business of his application to God. This must be the office of private exercises of devotion, being imperfectly, if at all, practicable in any other.

* The reformed Churches of Christendom, sticking close in this article to their guide, have laid aside prayers for the dead, as authorised by no precept or precedent found in Scripture. For the same reason they properly reject the invocation of saints; as also because such invocations suppose, in the saints whom they address, a knowledge which can perceive what passes in different regions of the earth at the same time. And they deem it too much to take for granted, without the smallest intimation of such a thing in Scripture, that any created being possesses a faculty little short of that omniscience and omnipresence which they ascribe to the Deity,

Private prayer is generally more devout and earnest than the share we are capable of taking in joint acts of worship; because it affords leisure and opportunity for the circumstantial recollection of those personal wants, by the remembrance and ideas of which the warmth and earnestness of prayer are chiefly excited.

Private prayer, in proportion as it is usually accompanied with more actual thought and reflection of the petitioner's own, has a greater tendency than other modes of devotion to revive and fasten upon the mind the general impressions of religion. Solitude powerfully assists this effect. When a man finds himself alone in communication with his Creator, his imagination becomes filled with a conflux of awful ideas concerning the universal agency, and invisible presence, of that Being; concerning what is likely to become of himself: and of the superlative importance of providing for the happiness of his future existence by endeavours to please *him* who is the arbiter of his destiny: reflections which, whenever they gain admittance, for a season overwhelm all others; and leave, when they depart, a solemnity upon the thoughts, that will seldom fail, in some degree, to affect the conduct of life.

Private prayer, thus recommended by its own propriety and by advantages not attainable in any form of religious communion, receives a superior sanction from the authority and example of Christ: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."—"And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain *apart to pray.*" Matt. vi. 6; xiv. 23.

II. *Family Prayer.*

The peculiar use of family piety consists in its influence upon servants, and the young members of a family, who want sufficient seriousness and reflection to retire of their own accord to the exercise of private devotion, and whose attention you cannot easily command in public worship. The example also and authority of a father and master act in this way with the greatest force; for his private prayers, to which his children and servants are not witnesses, act not at all upon them as examples; and his attendance upon public worship they will readily impute to fashion, to a care to preserve appearances, to a concern for decency and character, and to many motives besides a sense of duty to God. Add to this, that forms of public worship, in proportion as they are more comprehensive, are always less interesting, than family prayers; and that the ardour of devotion is better supported, and the sympathy more easily propagated, through a small assembly, connected by the affections of domestic society, than in the presence of a mixed congregation.

III. *Public Worship.*

If the worship of God be a duty of religion, public worship is a necessary institution; forasmuch as without it, the greater part of mankind would exercise no religious worship at all.

These assemblies afford also, at the same time, opportunities for moral and religious instruction to those who otherwise would receive none. In all protestant, and in most Christian countries, the elements of natural religion, and the important parts of the Evangelic history, are familiar to the lowest of the people. This competent degree and general diffusion of religious knowledge amongst all orders of Christians, which will appear a great thing when compared with the intellectual condition of barbarous nations, can fairly, I think, be ascribed to no other cause than the regular establishment of assemblies for divine worship; in which, either portions of Scripture are recited and explained, or the principles of Christian erudition are so constantly taught in sermons, incorporated with liturgies, or expressed in extempore prayer, as to imprint, by the very repetition, some knowledge and memory of these subjects upon the most unqualified and careless hearer.

The two reasons above stated, bind all the members of a community to uphold public worship, by their presence and example, although the helps and opportunities which it affords may not be necessary to the devotion or edification of all; and to some may be useless: for it is easily foreseen, how soon religious assemblies would fall into contempt and disuse, if that class of mankind who are above seeking instruction in them, and want not that their own piety should be assisted by either forms or society in devotion, were to withdraw their attendance; especially when it is considered, that all who please, are at liberty to rank themselves of this class. This argument meets the only serious apology that can be made for the absenting of ourselves from public worship.—"Surely (some will say) I may be excused from going to church, so long as I pray at home: and have no reason to doubt that my prayers are as acceptable and efficacious in my closet, as in a cathedral; still less can I think myself obliged to sit out a tedious sermon, in order to hear what is known already, what is better learnt from books, or suggested by meditation."—They, whose qualifications and habits best supply to themselves all the effect of public ordinances, will be the last to prefer this excuse, when they advert to the *general consequence* of setting up such an exemption, as well as when they consider the *turn* which is sure to be given in the neighbourhood to their absence from public worship. You stay from church, to employ the Sabbath at home in exercises and studies suited to its proper business: your next neighbour stays from church to spend the seventh day less religiously than he passed any of the six, in a sleepy, stupid rest, or at some rendezvous of drunkenness and debauchery, and yet thinks that he is only imitating you, because you both agree in not going to church. The same consideration should overrule many small scruples concerning the rigorous propriety of some things, which may be contained in the forms, or admitted into the administration, of the public worship of our communion: for it seems impossible that even "two or three should be gathered together" in any act of social worship, if each one require from the rest an implicit submission to his objections, and if no man will attend upon a religious service which in any point contradicts his opinion of truth, or falls short of his ideas of perfection.

Beside the direct necessity of public worship to the greater part of every Christian community, (supposing worship at all to be a Christian duty,) there are other valuable advantages growing out of the use of religious assemblies, without being designed in the institution or thought of by the individuals who compose them.

1. Joining in prayer and praises to their common Creator and Governor, has a sensible ten-

dency to unite mankind together, and to cherish and enlarge the generous affections.

So many pathetic reflections are awakened by every exercise of social devotion, that most men, I believe, carry away from public worship a better temper towards the rest of mankind, than they brought with them. Sprung from the same extraction, preparing together for the period of all worldly distinctions, reminded of their mutual infirmities and common dependency, imploring and receiving support and supplies from the same great source of power and bounty, having all one interest to secure, one Lord to serve, one judgment, the supreme object to all of their hopes and fears, to look towards; it is hardly possible, in this position, to behold mankind as strangers, competitors, or enemies; or not to regard them as children of the same family, assembled before their common parent, and with some portion of the tenderness which belongs to the most endearing of our domestic relations. It is not to be expected, that any single effect of this kind should be considerable or lasting; but the frequent return of such sentiments as the presence of a devout congregation naturally suggests, will gradually melt down the ruggedness of many unkind passions, and may generate, in time, a permanent and productive benevolence.

2. Assemblies for the purpose of divine worship, placing men under impressions by which they are taught to consider their relation to the Deity, and to contemplate those around them with a view to that relation, force upon their thoughts the natural equality of the human species, and thereby promote humility and condescension in the highest orders of the community, and inspire the lowest with a sense of their rights. The distinctions of civil life are almost always insisted upon too much, and urged too far. Whatever, therefore, conduces to restore the level, by qualifying the dispositions which grow out of great elevation or depression of rank, improves the character on both sides. Now things are made to appear little, by being placed beside what is great. In which manner, superiorities, that occupy the whole field of imagination, will vanish or shrink to their proper diminutiveness, when compared with the distance by which even the highest of men are removed from the Supreme Being; and this comparison is naturally introduced by all acts of joint worship. If ever the poor man holds up his head, it is at church: if ever the rich man views him with respect, it is there: and both will be the better, and the public profited, the oftener they meet in a situation, in which the consciousness of dignity in the one is tempered and mitigated, and the spirit of the other erected and confirmed. We recommend nothing adverse to subordinations which are established and necessary: but then it should be remembered, that subordination itself is an evil, being an evil to the subordinate, who are the majority, and therefore ought not to be carried a tittle beyond what the greater good, the peaceable government of the community, requires.

The public worship of Christians is a duty of Divine appointment. "Where two or three," says Christ, "are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* This invitation will want nothing of the force of a command with those who respect the person and authority from which it proceeds. Again, in the Epistle to the Hebrews; "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is;"* which reproof seems as applicable to the desertion of our public worship at this day, as to the forsaking the religious assemblies of Christians in the age of the apostle. Independently of these passages of Scripture, a disciple of Christianity will hardly think himself at liberty to dispute a practice set on foot by the inspired preachers of his religion, coeval with its institution, and retained by every sect into which it has been since divided.

* Matt. xviii. 20.

CHAPTER V.

Of Forms of Prayer in Public Worship.

LITURGIES, or preconcerted forms of public devotion, being neither enjoined in Scripture, nor forbidden, there can be no good reason for either receiving or rejecting them, but that of expediency; which expediency is to be gathered from a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages attending upon this mode of worship, with those which usually accompany extemporary prayer.

The advantages of a liturgy are these:

I. That it prevents absurd, extravagant, or impious addresses to God, which, in an order of men so numerous as the sacerdotal, the folly and enthusiasm of many must always be in danger of producing, where the conduct of the public worship is entrusted, without restraint or assistance, to the discretion and abilities of the officiating minister.

II. That it prevents the *confusion* of extemporary prayer, in which the congregation, being ignorant of each petition before they hear it, and having little or no time to join in it after they have heard it, are confounded between their attention to the minister, and to their own devotion. The devotion of the hearer is necessarily suspended, until a petition be concluded; and before he can assent to it, or properly adopt it, that is, before he can address the same request to God for himself, and from himself, his attention is called off to keep pace with what succeeds. Add to this, that the mind of the hearer is held in continual expectation, and detained from its proper business, by the very novelty with which it is gratified. A congregation may be pleased and affected with the prayers and devotion of their minister, without joining in them; in like manner as an audience oftentimes are with the representation of devotion upon the stage, who, nevertheless, come away without being conscious of having exercised any act of devotion themselves. *Joint* prayer, which amongst all denominations of Christians is the declared design of "coming together," is prayer in which all *join*; and not that which one alone in the congregation conceives and delivers, and of which the rest are merely hearers. This objection seems fundamental, and holds even where the minister's office is discharged with every possible advantage and accomplishment. The labouring recollection, and embarrassed or tumultuous delivery, of many extempore speakers, form an additional objection to this mode of public worship: for these imperfections are very general, and give

* Heb. x. 25.

great pain to the serious part of a congregation, as well as afford a profane diversion to the levity of the other part.

These advantages of a liturgy are connected with two principal inconveniences: first, that forms of prayer composed in one age become unfit for another, by the unavoidable change of language, circumstances, and opinions: secondly, that the perpetual repetition of the same form of words produces weariness and inattentiveness in the congregation. However, both these inconveniences are in their nature vincible. Occasional revisions of a liturgy may obviate the first, and devotion will supply a remedy for the second: or they may both subsist in a considerable degree, and yet be out-weighed by the objections which are inseparable from extemporary prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is a precedent, as well as a pattern, for forms of prayer. Our Lord appears, if not to have prescribed, at least to have authorized, the use of fixed forms, when he complied with the request of the disciple, who said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Luke xi. I.

The properties required in a public liturgy are, that it be compendious; that it express just conceptions of the Divine Attributes; that it recite such wants as a congregation are likely to feel, and no other; and that it contain as few controverted propositions as possible.

I. That it be compendious.

It were no difficult task to contract the liturgies of most churches into half their present compass, and yet retain every distinct petition, as well as the substance of every sentiment which can be found in them. But brevity may be studied too much. The composer of a liturgy must not sit down to his work with the hope, that the devotion of the congregation will be uniformly sustained throughout, or that every part will be attended to by every hearer. If this could be depended upon, a very short service would be sufficient for every purpose that can be answered or designed by social worship: but seeing the attention of most men is apt to wander and return at intervals, and by starts, he will admit a certain degree of amplification and repetition, of diversity of expression upon the same subject, and variety of phrase and form with little addition to the sense, to the end that the attention, which has been slumbering or absent during one part of the service, may be excited and recalled by another; and the assembly kept together until it may reasonably be presumed, that the most heedless and inadvertent have performed some act of devotion, and the most desultory attention been caught by some part or other of the public service. On the other hand, the too great length of church-services is more unfavourable to piety, than almost any fault of composition can be. It begets, in many, an early and unconquerable dislike to the public worship of their country or communion. They come to church seldom, and enter the doors, when they do come, under the apprehension of a tedious attendance, which they prepare for at first, or soon after relieve, by composing themselves to a drowsy forgetfulness of the place and duty, or by sending abroad their thoughts in search of more amusing occupation. Although there may be some few of a disposition not to be wearied with religious exercises; yet, where a ritual is prolix, and the celebration of divine service long, no effect is in general to be looked for, but that indolence will find in it an excuse, and piety be disconcerted by impatience.

The length and repetitions complained of in our liturgy, are not so much the fault of the compilers, as the effect of uniting into *one* service what was originally, but with very little regard to the conveniency of the people, distributed into *three*. Notwithstanding that dread of innovations in religion, which seems to have become the *panic* of the age, few, I should suppose, would be displeased with such omissions, abridgements, or change in the arrangement, as the combination of separate services must necessarily require, even supposing each to have been faultless in itself. If, together with these alterations, the Epistles and Gospels, and Collects which precede them, were composed and selected with more regard to unity of subject and design; and the Psalms and Lessons either left to the choice of the minister, or better accommodated to the capacity of the audience, and the edification of modern life; the church of England would be in possession of a liturgy, in which those who assent to her doctrines would have little to blame, and the most dissatisfied must acknowledge many beauties. The style throughout is excellent; calm, without coldness; and, though every where sedate, oftentimes affecting. The pauses in the service are disposed at proper intervals. The transitions from one office of devotion to another, from confession to prayer, from prayer to thanksgiving, from thanksgiving to "hearing of the word," are contrived like scenes in the drama, to supply the mind with a succession of diversified engagements. As much variety is introduced also in the form of praying, as this kind of composition seems capable of admitting. The prayer at one time is continued; at another, broken by responses, or cast into short articulate ejaculations: and sometimes the congregation is called upon to take its share in the service, by being left to complete a sentence which the minister had begun. The enumeration of human wants and sufferings in the Litany, is almost complete. A Christian petitioner can have few things to ask of God, or to deprecate, which he will not find there expressed, and for the most part with inimitable tenderness and simplicity.

II. That it express just conceptions of the Divine Attributes.

This is an article in which no care can be too great. The popular notions of God are formed, in a great measure, from the accounts which the people receive of his nature and character in their religious assemblies. An error here becomes the error of multitudes: and as it is a subject in which almost every opinion leads the way to some practical consequence, the purity or depravation of public manners will be affected, amongst other causes, by the truth or corruption of the public forms of worship.

III. That it recite such wants as the congregation are likely to feel, and no other.

Of forms of prayer which offend not egregiously against truth and decency, that has the most merit, which is best calculated to keep alive the devotion of the assembly. It were to be wished, therefore, that every part of a liturgy were personally applicable to every individual in the congregation; and that nothing were introduced to interrupt the passion, or damp the flame, which it is not easy to rekindle. Upon this principle, the

state prayers in our liturgy should be fewer and shorter.—Whatever may be pretended, the congregation do not feel that concern in the subject of these prayers, which must be felt, ere ever prayers be made to God with earnestness. The *state style* likewise seems unseasonably introduced into these prayers, as ill according with that annihilation of human greatness, of which every act that carries the mind to God, presents the idea.

IV. That it contain as few controverted propositions as possible.

We allow to each church the truth of its peculiar tenets, and all the importance which zeal can ascribe to them. We dispute not here the right or the expediency of framing creeds, or of imposing subscriptions. But why should every position which a church maintains, be woven with so much industry into her forms of public worship? Some are offended, and some are excluded; this is an evil of itself, at least to *them:* and what advantage or satisfaction can be derived to the *rest*, from the separation of their brethren, it is difficult to imagine; unless it were a duty to publish our system of polemic divinity, under the name of making confession of our faith, every time we worship God; or a sin to agree in religious exercises with those from whom we differ in some religious opinions. Indeed, where one man thinks it his duty constantly to worship a being, whom another cannot, with the assent of his conscience, permit himself to worship at all, there seems to be no place for comprehension, or any expedient left but a quiet secession. All other differences may be compromised by silence. If sects and schisms be an evil, they are as much to be avoided by one side as the other. If sectaries are blamed for taking unnecessary offence, established churches are no less culpable for unnecessarily giving it; they are bound at least to produce a command, or a reason of equivalent utility, for shutting out any from their communion, by mixing with divine worship doctrines, which, whether true or false, are unconnected in their nature with devotion.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Use of Sabbatical Institutions.

An assembly cannot be collected, unless the time of assembling be fixed and known beforehand: and if the design of the assembly require that it be holden frequently, it is easiest that it should return at stated intervals. This produces a necessity of appropriating set seasons to the social offices of religion. It is also highly convenient that the *same* seasons be observed throughout the country, that all may be employed, or all at leisure, together; for if the recess from worldly occupation be not general, one man's business will perpetually interfere with another man's devotion; the buyer will be calling at the shop when the seller is gone to church. This part, therefore, of the religious distinction of seasons, namely, a general intermission of labour and business during times previously set apart for the exercise of public worship, is founded in the reasons which make public worship itself a duty. But the celebration of divine service never occupies the whole day. What remains, therefore, of Sunday, beside the part of it employed at church, must be considered as a mere rest from the ordinary occupations of civil life: and he who would defend the institution, as it is required by law to be observed in Christian countries, unless he can produce a command for a *Christian Sabbath*, must point out the uses of it in that view.

First, then, that interval of relaxation which Sunday affords to the laborious part of mankind, contributes greatly to the comfort and satisfaction of their lives, both as it refreshes them for the time, and as it relieves their six days' labour by the prospect of a day of rest always approaching; which could not be said of *casual* indulgences of leisure and rest, even were they more frequent than there is reason to expect they would be if left to the discretion or humanity of interested task-masters. To this difference it may be added, that holy-days which come seldom and unexpected, are unprovided, when they do come, with any duty or employment; and the manner of spending them being regulated by no public decency or established usage, they are commonly consumed in rude, if not criminal pastimes, in stupid sloth, or brutish intemperance. Whoever considers how much sabbatical institutions conduce, in this respect, to the happiness and civilization of the labouring classes of mankind, and reflects how great a majority of the human species these classes compose, will acknowledge the utility, whatever he may believe of the origin, of this distinction; and will consequently perceive it to be every man's duty to uphold the observation of Sunday when once established, let the establishment have proceeded from whom or from what authority it will.

Nor is there any thing lost to the community by the intermission of public industry one day in the week. For, in countries tolerably advanced in population and the arts of civil life, there is always enough of human labour, and to spare. The difficulty is not so much to procure, as to employ it. The addition of the seventh day's labour to that of the other six, would have no other effect than to reduce the price. The labourer himself, who deserved and suffered most by the change, would gain nothing.

2. Sunday, by suspending many public diversions, and the ordinary rotation of employment, leaves to men of all ranks and professions sufficient leisure, and not more than what is sufficient, both for the external offices of Christianity, and the retired, but equally necessary duties of religious meditation and inquiry. It is true, that many do not convert their leisure to this purpose; but it is of moment, and is all which a public constitution can effect, that to every one be allowed the opportunity.

3. They, whose humanity embraces the whole sensitive creation, will esteem it no inconsiderable recommendation of a weekly return of public rest, that it affords a respite to the toil of brutes. Nor can we omit to recount this among the uses which the Divine Founder of the *Jewish* Sabbath expressly appointed a law of the institution.

We admit, that none of these reasons show why Sunday should be preferred to any other day in the week, or one day in seven to one day in six, or eight: but these points, which in their nature are of arbitrary determination, being established to our hands, our obligation applies to the subsisting establishment, so long as we confess that some such institution is necessary, and are neither able nor attempt to substitute any other in its place.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Scripture Account of Sabbatical Institutions.

The subject, so far as it makes any part of Christian morality, is contained in two questions:

I. Whether the command, by which the Jewish Sabbath was instituted, extends to Christians?

II. Whether any new command was delivered by Christ; or any other day substituted in the place of the Jewish Sabbath by the authority or example of his apostles?

In treating of the first question, it will be necessary to collect the accounts which are preserved of the institution, in the Jewish history: for the seeing these accounts together, and in one point of view, will be the best preparation for the discussing or judging of any arguments on one side or the other.

In the second chapter of Genesis, the historian, having concluded his account of the six days' creation, proceeds thus: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made; and God *blessed* the seventh day and *sanctified* it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." After this, we hear no more of the Sabbath, or of the seventh day, as in any manner distinguished from the other six, until the history brings us down to the sojourning of the Jews in the wilderness, when the following remarkable passage occurs. Upon the complaint of the people for want of food, God was pleased to provide for their relief by a miraculous supply of manna, which was found every morning upon the ground about the camp: "and they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating; and when the sun waxed hot, it melted: and it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses: and he said unto them, this is that which the Lord hath said, *To-morrow is the rest of the Holy-Sabbath unto the Lord:* bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink [as it had done before, when some of them left it till the morning,] neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to-day: *for to-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord;* to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, *for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath,* therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place: let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day." Exodus xvi.

Not long after this, the Sabbath, as is well known, was established with great solemnity, in the fourth commandment.

Now, in my opinion, the transaction in the wilderness above recited, was the first actual institution of the Sabbath. For if the Sabbath had been instituted at the time of the creation, as the words in Genesis may seem at first sight to import; and if it had been observed all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, a period of about two thousand five hundred years; it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it, should occur, either in the general history of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and those extremely abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the first three Jewish patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is sufficiently circumstantial and domestic. Nor is there, in the passage above quoted from the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, any intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution, which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended; nor is any such neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah; nor, lastly, is any permission recorded to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency.

The passage in the second chapter of Genesis, which creates the whole controversy upon the subject, is not inconsistent with this opinion: for as the seventh day was erected into a Sabbath, on account of God's resting upon that day from the work of the creation, it was natural in the historian, when he had related the history of the creation, and of God's ceasing from it on the seventh day, to add; "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that on it he had rested from all his work which God created and made;" although the blessing and sanctification, *i. e.* the religious distinction and appropriation of that day, were not actually made till many ages afterwards. The words do not assert that God *then* "blessed" and "sanctified" the seventh day, but that he blessed and sanctified it *for that reason;* and if any ask, why the Sabbath, or sanctification of the seventh day, was *then* mentioned, if it was not *then* appointed, the answer is at hand: the order of connexion, and not of time, introduced the mention of the Sabbath, in the history of the subject which it was ordained to commemorate.

This interpretation is strongly supported by a passage in the prophet Ezekiel, where the Sabbath is plainly spoken of as *given,* (and what else can that mean, but as *first instituted?*) in the wilderness. "Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness: and I gave them my statutes and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them: moreover also I *gave them my Sabbaths,* to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ezek. xx. 10, 11, 12.

Nehemiah also recounts the promulgation of the sabbatical law amongst the transactions in the wilderness; which supplies another considerable argument in aid of our opinion:—"Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments, *and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath,* and commandedst them precepts,

statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant, and gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock."* Nehem. ix. 13.

If it be inquired what duties were appointed for the Jewish Sabbath, and under what penalties and in what manner it was observed amongst the ancient Jews; we find that, by the fourth commandment, a strict cessation from work was enjoined, not only upon Jews by birth, or religious profession, but upon all who resided within the limits of the Jewish state; that the same was to be permitted to their slaves and their cattle; that this rest was not to be violated, under pain of death: "Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath-day, he shall surely be put to death." Exod. xxxi. 15. Beside which, the seventh day was to be solemnized by double sacrifices in the temple:—"And on the Sabbath-day *two* lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth-deals of flour for a meat-offering, mingled with oil, and the drink-offering thereof; this is the burnt-offering of every Sabbath, beside the continual burnt-offering and his drink-offering." Numb. xxviii. 9, 10. Also *holy convocations*, which mean, we presume, assemblies for the purpose of public worship or religious instruction, were directed to be holden on the Sabbath-day: "the seventh day is a sabbath of rest, an holy convocation." Levit. xxiii. 3.

And accordingly we read, that the Sabbath was in fact observed amongst the Jews by a scrupulous abstinence from every thing which, by any possible construction, could be deemed labour; as from dressing meat, from travelling beyond a Sabbath-day's journey, or about a single mile. In the Maccabean wars, they suffered a thousand of their number to be slain, rather than do any thing in their own defence on the Sabbath-day. In the final siege of Jerusalem, after they had so far overcome their scruples as to defend their persons when attacked, they refused any operation on the Sabbath-day, by which they might have interrupted the enemy in filling up the trench. After the establishment of synagogues, (of the origin of which we have no account,) it was the custom to assemble in them on the Sabbath-day, for the purpose of hearing the law rehearsed and explained, and for the exercise, it is probable, of public devotion: "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, *being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day*." The seventh day is *Saturday;* and, agreeably to the Jewish way of computing the day, the Sabbath held from six o'clock on the Friday evening, to six o'clock on Saturday evening.—These observations being premised, we approach the main question, Whether the command by which the Jewish Sabbath was instituted, extend to us?

If the Divine command was actually delivered at the creation, it was addressed, no doubt, to the whole human species alike, and continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it. If the command was published for the first time in the wilderness, then it was immediately directed to the Jewish people alone; and something further, either in the subject or circumstances of the command, will be necessary to show, that it was designed for any other. It is on this account that the question concerning the date of the institution was first to be considered. The former opinion precludes all debate about the extent of the obligation: the latter admits, and, *prima facie* induces a belief, that the Sabbath ought to be considered as part of the peculiar law of the Jewish policy.

Which belief receives great confirmation from the following arguments:

The Sabbath is described as a sign between God and the people of Israel:—"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant; *it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever*." Exodus xxxi. 16, 17. Again: "And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them; *moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them*, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ezek. xx. 12. Now it does not seem easy to understand how the Sabbath could be a *sign* between God and the people of Israel, unless the observance of it was peculiar to that people, and designed to be so.

The distinction of the Sabbath is, in its nature, as much a positive ceremonial institution, as that of many other seasons which were appointed by the Levitical law to be kept holy, and to be observed by a strict rest; as the first and seventh days of unleavened bread; the feast of Pentecost; the feast of tabernacles: and in the twenty-third chapter of Exodus, the Sabbath and these are recited together.

If the command by which the Sabbath was instituted be binding upon Christians, it must be binding as to the day, the duties, and the penalty; in none of which it is received.

The observance of the Sabbath was not one of the articles enjoined by the Apostles, in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, upon them—"which, from among the Gentiles, were turned unto God."

St. Paul evidently appears to have considered the Sabbath as part of the Jewish ritual, and not obligatory upon Christians as such:—"Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or *of the Sabbath days*, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Col. ii. 16, 17.

I am aware of only two objections which can be opposed to the force of these arguments; one is, that the reason assigned in the fourth commandment for hallowing the seventh day, namely, "because God rested on the seventh day from the work of the creation," is a reason which pertains to all mankind: the other, that the command which enjoins the observance of the Sabbath is inserted in the Decalogue, of which all the other precepts and prohibitions are of moral and universal obligation.

Upon the first objection it may be remarked, that although in Exodus the commandment is founded upon God's rest from the creation, in

* From the mention of the Sabbath in so close a connexion with the descent of God upon mount Sinai, and the delivery of the law from thence, one would be inclined to believe that Nehemiah referred solely to the fourth commandment. But the fourth commandment certainly did not first make known the Sabbath. And it is apparent, that Nehemiah observed not the order of events; for he speaks of what passed upon mount Sinai before he mentions the miraculous supplies of bread and water, though the Jews did not arrive at mount Sinai, till some time after both these miracles were wrought.

Deuteronomy the commandment is repeated with a reference to a different event:—"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou: and remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm; *therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day." It is farther observable, that God's rest from the creation is proposed as the reason of the institution, even where the institution itself is spoken of as peculiar to the Jews:—"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant: it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: *for* in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed." The truth is, these different reasons were assigned, to account for different circumstances in the command. If a Jew inquired, why the *seventh day* was sanctified rather than the sixth or eighth, his law told him, because God rested on the *seventh day* from the creation. If he asked, why was the same rest indulged to *slaves?* his law bade him remember, that he also was a *slave* in the land of Egypt, and "that the Lord his God brought him out thence." In this view, the two reasons are perfectly compatible with each other, and with a third end of the institution, its being a *sign* between God and the people of Israel; but in this view they determine nothing concerning the extent of the obligation. If the reason by its proper energy had constituted a natural obligation, or if it had been mentioned with a view to the extent of the obligation, we should submit to the conclusion that all were comprehended by the command who are concerned in the reason. But the sabbatic rest being a duty which results from the ordination and authority of a positive law, the reason can be alleged no farther than as it explains the design of the legislator: and if it appear to be recited with an intentional application to one part of the law, it explains his design upon no other; if it be mentioned merely to account for the choice of the day, it does not explain his design as to the extent of the obligation.

With respect to the second objection, that inasmuch as the other nine commandments are confessedly of moral and universal obligation, it may reasonably be presumed that this is of the same; we answer, that this argument will have less weight, when it is considered that the distinction between positive and natural duties, like other distinctions of modern ethics, was unknown to the simplicity of ancient language; and that there are various passages in Scripture, in which duties of a political, or ceremonial, or positive nature, and confessedly of partial obligation, are enumerated, and without any mark of discrimination, along with others which are natural and universal. Of this the following is an incontestable example. "But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right; and hath not eaten upon the mountains, nor hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel; neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, *neither hath come near to a menstruous woman;* and hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge; hath spoiled none by violence; hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; *he that hath not given upon usury, neither hath taken any increase;* that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity; hath executed true judgment between man and man; hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God." Ezekiel xviii. 5—9. The same thing may be observed of the apostolic decree recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts:—"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burthen than these necessary things, that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and *from fornication:* from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well."

II. If the law by which the Sabbath was instituted, was a law only to the Jews, it becomes an important question with the Christian inquirer, whether the Founder of his religion delivered any new command upon the subject; or, if that should not appear to be the case, whether any day was appropriated to the service of religion by the authority or example of his apostles.

The practice of holding religious assemblies upon the first day of the week, was so early and universal in the Christian Church, that it carries with it considerable proof of having originated from some precept of Christ, or of his apostles, though none such be now extant. It was upon the *first* day of the week that the disciples were assembled, when Christ appeared to them for the first time after his resurrection; "then the same day at evening, *being the first day of the week*, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst of them." John xx. 19. This, for any thing that appears in the account, might, as to the day, have been accidental; but in the 26th verse of the same chapter we read, that "after eight days," that is, on the *first day* of the week *following*, "*again* the disciples were within;" which second meeting upon the same day of the week looks like an appointment and design to meet on that particular day. In the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we find the same custom in a Christian church at a great distance from Jerusalem:—"And we came unto them to Troas in five days, where we abode seven days; and *upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread*, Paul preached unto them." Acts xx. 6, 7. The manner in which the historian mentions the disciples coming together to break bread on the *first day* of the week, shows, I think, that the practice by this time was familiar and established. St. Paul to the Corinthians writes thus: "Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye; *upon the first day of the week* let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come." I Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Which direction affords a probable proof, that the *first* day of the week was already, amongst the Christians both of Corinth and Galatia, distinguished from the rest by some religious application or other. At the time that St. John wrote

the book of his Revelation, the first day of the week had obtained the name of the *Lord's day*;—"I was in the spirit," says he, "*on the Lord's day*." Rev. i. 10. Which name, and St. John's use of it, sufficiently denote the appropriation of this day to the service of religion, and that this appropriation was perfectly known to the Churches of Asia. I make no doubt that by the *Lord's day* was meant the *first* day of the week; for we find no footsteps of any distinction of days, which could entitle any other to that appellation. The subsequent history of Christianity corresponds with the accounts delivered on this subject in Scripture.

It will be remembered, that we are contending, by these proofs, for no other duty upon the first day of the week, than that of holding and frequenting religious assemblies. A cessation upon that day from labour, beyond the time of attendance upon public worship, is not intimated in any passage of the New Testament; nor did Christ or his apostles deliver, that we know of, any command to their disciples for a discontinuance, upon that day, of the common offices of their professions; a reserve which none will see reason to wonder at, or to blame as a defect in the institution, who consider that, in the primitive condition of Christianity, the observance of a new Sabbath would have been useless, or inconvenient, or impracticable. During Christ's personal ministry, his religion was preached to the Jews alone. *They* already had a Sabbath, which, as citizens and subjects of that economy, they were obliged to keep; and did keep. It was not therefore probable that Christ would enjoin another day of rest in conjunction with this. When the new religion came forth into the Gentile world, converts to it were, for the most part, made from those classes of society who have not their time and labour at their own disposal; and it was scarcely to be expected, that unbelieving masters and magistrates, and they who directed the employment of others, would permit their slaves and labourers to rest from their work every seventh day: or that civil government, indeed, would have submitted to the loss of a seventh part of the public industry, and that too in addition to the numerous festivals which the national religions indulged to the people; at least, this would have been an incumbrance, which might have greatly retarded the reception of Christianity in the world. In reality, the institution of a weekly Sabbath is so connected with the functions of civil life, and requires so much of the concurrence of civil law, in its regulation and support, that it cannot, perhaps, properly be made the ordinance of any religion, till that religion be received as the religion of the state.

The opinion, that Christ and his apostles meant to retain the duties of the Jewish Sabbath, shifting only the day from the seventh to the first, seems to prevail without sufficient proof; nor does any evidence remain in Scripture (of what, however, is not improbable,) that the first day of the week was thus distinguished in commemoration of our Lord's resurrection.

The conclusion from the whole inquiry (for it is our business to follow the arguments, to whatever probability they conduct us,) is this: The *assembling* upon the first day of the week for the purpose of public worship and religious instruction, is a law of Christianity of Divine appointment; the *resting* on that day from our employments longer than we are detained from them by attendance upon these assemblies, is to Christians an ordinance of human institution; binding nevertheless upon the conscience of every individual of a country in which a weekly Sabbath is established, for the sake of the beneficial purposes which the public and regular observance of it promotes, and recommended perhaps in some degree to the Divine approbation, by the resemblance it bears to what God was pleased to make a solemn part of the law which he delivered to the people of Israel, and by its subserviency to many of the same uses.

CHAPTER VIII.

By what Acts and Omissions the Duty of the Christian Sabbath is violated.

Since the obligation upon Christians to comply with the religious observance of Sunday, arises from the public uses of the institution, and the authority of the apostolic practice, the *manner* of observing it ought to be that which best fulfils *these* uses, and conforms the nearest to *this* practice.

The uses proposed by the institution are:

1. To facilitate attendance upon public worship.

2. To meliorate the condition of the laborious classes of mankind, by regular and seasonable returns of rest.

3. By a general suspension of business and amusement, to invite and enable persons of every description to apply their time and thoughts to subjects appertaining to their salvation.

With the primitive Christians, the peculiar, and probably for sometime the only, distinction of the first day of the week, was the holding of religious assemblies upon that day. We learn, however, from the testimony of a very early writer amongst them, that they also reserved the day for religious meditations;—*Unusquisque nostrum* (saith Irenæus) *sabbatizat spiritualiter, meditatione legis gaudens, opificium Dei admirans.*

Wherefore the duty of the day is violated,

1st, By all such employments or engagements as (though differing from our ordinary occupation) hinder our attendance upon public worship, or take up so much of our time as not to leave a sufficient part of the day at leisure for religious reflection; as the going of journeys, the paying or receiving of visits which engage the whole day, or employing the time at home in writing letters, settling accounts, or in applying ourselves to studies, or the reading of books, which bear no relation to the business of religion.

2dly, By unnecessary encroachments on the rest and liberty which Sunday ought to bring to the inferior orders of the community; as by keeping servants on that day confined and busied in preparations for the superfluous elegancies of our table, or dress.

3dly, By such recreations as are customarily forborne out of respect to the day; as hunting, shooting, fishing, public diversions, frequenting taverns, playing at cards or dice.

If it be asked, as it often has been, wherein consists the difference between walking out with your staff or with your gun? between spending

the evening at home, or in a tavern? between passing the Sunday afternoon at a game of cards, or in conversation not more edifying, not always so inoffensive?—to these, and to the same question under a variety of forms, and in a multitude of similar examples, we return the following answer:—That the religious observance of Sunday, if it ought to be retained at all, must be upholden by some public and visible distinctions: that, draw the line of distinction where you will, many actions which are situated on the confines of the line, will differ very little, and yet lie on the opposite sides of it:—that every trespass upon that reserve which public decency has established, breaks down the fence by which the day is separated to the service of religion:—that it is unsafe to trifle with scruples and habits that have a beneficial tendency, although founded merely in custom:—that these liberties, however intended, will certainly be considered by those who observe them, not only as disrespectful to the day and institution, but as proceeding from a secret contempt of the Christian faith:—that consequently, they diminish a reverence for religion in others, so far as the authority of our opinion, or the efficacy of our example, reaches; or rather, so far as either will serve for an excuse of negligence to those who are glad of any: that as to cards and dice, which put in their claim to be considered among the *harmless* occupations of a vacant hour, it may be observed that few find any difficulty in refraining from *play* on Sunday, except they who sit down to it with the views and eagerness of gamesters:—that *gaming* is seldom innocent:—that the anxiety and perturbations, however, which it excites, are inconsistent with the tranquillity and frame of temper in which the duties and thoughts of religion should always both find and leave us: and lastly, we shall remark, that the example of other countries, where the same and greater licence is *allowed*, affords no apology for irregularities in our own; because a practice which is tolerated by public usage, neither receives the same construction, nor gives the same offence, as where it is censured and prohibited.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Reverencing the Deity.

In many persons, a seriousness, and sense of awe, overspread the imagination, whenever the idea of the Supreme Being is presented to their thoughts. This effect, which forms a considerable security against vice, is the consequence not so much of reflection, as of habit; which habit being generated by the external expressions of reverence which we use ourselves, or observe in others, may be destroyed by causes opposite to these, and especially by that familiar levity with which some learn to speak of the Deity, of his attributes, providence, revelations, or worship.

God hath been pleased (no matter for what reason, although probably for this) to forbid the vain mention of his name:—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Now the mention is *vain*, when it is useless: and it is useless, when it is neither likely nor intended to serve any good purpose; as when it flows from the lips idle and unmeaning, or is applied, on occasions inconsistent with any consideration of religion and devotion, to express our anger, our earnestness, our courage, or our mirth: or indeed when it is used at all, except in acts of religion, or in serious and seasonable discourse upon religious subjects.

The prohibition of the third commandment is recognised by Christ, in his sermon upon the mount; which sermon adverts to none but the moral parts of the Jewish law: "I say unto you, Swear not at all; but let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil." The Jews probably interpreted the prohibition as restrained to the name Jehovah, the name which the Deity had appointed and appropriated to himself; Exod. vi. 3. The words of Christ extend the prohibition beyond the *name* of God, to every thing associated with the idea:—"Swear not, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King." Matt. v. 35.

The offence of profane swearing is aggravated by the consideration, that in *it* duty and decency are sacrificed to the slenderest of temptations. Suppose the habit, either from affectation, or by negligence and inadvertency, to be already formed, it must always remain within the power of the most ordinary resolution to correct it; and it cannot, one would think, cost a great deal to relinquish the pleasure and honour which it confers. A concern for duty is in fact never strong, when the exertion requisite to vanish a habit founded in no antecedent propensity, is thought too much, or too painful.

A contempt of positive duties, or rather of those duties for which the reason is not so plain as the command, indicates a disposition upon which the authority of Revelation has obtained little influence.—This remark is applicable to the offence of profane swearing, and describes, perhaps, pretty exactly, the general character of those who are most addicted to it.

Mockery and ridicule, when exercised upon the Scriptures, or even upon the places, persons, and forms, set apart for the ministration of religion, fall within the meaning of the law which forbids the profanation of God's name; especially as that law is extended by Christ's interpretation. They are, moreover, inconsistent with a religious frame of mind: for, as no one ever feels himself disposed to pleasantry, or capable of being diverted with the pleasantry of others, upon matters in which he is deeply interested; so a mind intent upon the acquisition of heaven, rejects with indignation every attempt to entertain it with jests, calculated to degrade or deride subjects which it never recollects but with seriousness and anxiety. Nothing but stupidity, or the most frivolous dissipation of thought, can make even the inconsiderate forget the supreme importance of every thing which relates to the expectation of a future existence. Whilst the infidel mocks at the superstitions of the vulgar, insults over their credulous fears, their childish errors, or fantastic rites, it does not occur to him to observe, that the most preposterous device by which the weakest devotee ever believed he was securing the happiness of a future life, is more rational than unconcern about it. Upon this subject, nothing is so absurd as indifference; no folly so contemptible as thoughtlessness and levity.

Finally; the knowledge of what is due to the

solemnity of those interests, concerning which Revelation professes to inform and direct us, may teach even those who are least inclined to respect the prejudicies of mankind, to observe a decorum in the style and conduct of religious disquisitions, with the neglect of which many adversaries of Christianity are justly chargeable. Serious arguments are fair on all sides. Christianity is but ill defended by refusing audience or toleration to the objections of unbelievers. But whilst we would have freedom of inquiry restrained by no laws but those of decency, we are entitled to demand, on behalf of a religion which holds forth to mankind assurances of immortality, that its credit be assailed by no other weapons than those of sober discussion and legitimate reasoning:—that the truth or falsehood of Christianity be never made a topic of raillery, a theme for the exercise of wit or eloquence, or a subject of contention for literary fame and victory:—that the cause be tried upon its merits:—that all applications to the fancy, passions, or prejudices of the reader, all attempts to pre-occupy, ensnare, or perplex his judgment, by any art, influence, or impression whatsoever, extrinsic to the proper grounds and evidence upon which his assent ought to proceed, be rejected from a question which involves in its determination the hopes, the virtue, and the repose, of millions:—that the controversy be managed on both sides with sincerity; that is, that nothing be produced, in the writings of either, contrary to, or beyond, the writer's own knowledge and persuasion:—that objections and difficulties be proposed, from no other motive than an honest and serious desire to obtain satisfaction, or to communicate information which may promote the discovery and progress of truth:—that in conformity with this design, every thing be stated with integrity, with method, precision, and simplicity; and above all, that whatever is published in opposition to received and confessedly beneficial persuasions, be set forth under a form which is likely to invite inquiry and to meet examination. If with these moderate and equitable conditions be compared the manner in which hostilities have been waged against the Christian religion, not only the votaries of the prevailing faith, but every man who looks forward with anxiety to the destination of his being, will see much to blame and to complain of. By *one unbeliever*, all the follies which have adhered, in a long course of dark and superstitious ages, to the popular creed, are assumed as so many doctrines of Christ and his apostles, for the purpose of subverting the whole system by the absurdities which it is *thus* represented to contain. By *another*, the ignorance and vices of the sacerdotal order, their mutual dissensions and persecutions, their usurpations and encroachments upon the intellectual liberty and civil rights of mankind, have been displayed with no small triumph and invective; not so much to guard the Christian laity against a repetition of the same injuries, (which is the only proper use to be made of the most flagrant examples of the past,) as to prepare the way for an insinuation, that the religion itself is nothing but a profitable fable, imposed upon the fears and credulity of the multitude, and upheld by the frauds and influence of an interested and crafty priesthood. And yet, how remotely is the character of the clergy connected with the truth of Christianity! What, after all, do the most disgraceful pages of ecclesiastical history prove, but that the passions of our common nature are not altered or excluded by distinctions of name, and that the characters of men are formed much more by the temptations than the duties of their profession? A *third* finds delight in collecting and repeating accounts of wars and massacres, of tumults and insurrections, excited in almost every age of the Christian æra by religious zeal; as though the vices of Christians were parts of Christianity; intolerance and extirpation precepts of the Gospel; or as if its spirit could be judged of from the counsels of princes, the intrigues of statesmen, the pretences of malice and ambition, or the unauthorised cruelties of some gloomy and virulent superstition. By a *fourth*, the succession and variety of popular religions; the vicissitudes with which sects and tenets have flourished and decayed; the zeal with which they were once supported, the negligence with which they are now remembered; the little share which reason and argument appear to have had in framing the creed, or regulating the religious conduct, of the multitude; the indifference and submission with which the religion of the state is generally received by the common people; the caprice and vehemence with which it is sometimes opposed; the phrensy with which men have been brought to contend for opinions and ceremonies, of which they knew neither the proof, the meaning, nor the original: lastly, the equal and undoubting confidence with which we hear the doctrines of Christ or of Confucius, the law of Moses or of Mahomet, the Bible, the Koran, or the Shaster, maintained or anathematized, taught or abjured, revered or derided, according as we live on this or on that side of a river; keep within or step over the boundaries of a state; or even in the same country, and by the same people, so often as the event of battle, or the issue of a negociation, delivers them to the dominion of a new master;—points, I say, of this sort are exhibited to the public attention, as so many arguments against the *truth* of the Christian religion;—and with success. For these topics, being brought together, and set off with some aggravation of circumstances, and with a vivacity of style and description familiar enough to the writings and conversation of free-thinkers, insensibly lead the imagination into a habit of classing Christianity with the delusions that have taken possession, by turns, of the public belief; and of regarding it, as what the scoffers of our faith represent it to be, *the superstition of the day.* But is this to deal honestly by the subject, or with the world? May not the same things be said, may not the same prejudices be excited by these representations, whether Christianity be true or false, or by whatever proofs its truth be attested? May not truth as well as falsehood be taken upon credit? May not a religion be founded upon evidence accessible and satisfactory to every mind competent to the inquiry, which yet, by the greatest part of its professors, is received upon authority?

But if the *matter* of those objections be reprehensible, as calculated to produce an effect upon the reader beyond what their real weight and place in the argument deserve, still more shall we discover of management and disingenuousness in the *form* under which they are dispersed among the public. Infidelity is served up in every shape that is likely to allure, surprise, or beguile the imagination; in a fable, a tale, a novel, a poem; in interspersed and broken hints, remote and oblique surmises; in books of travels, of philosophy,

of natural history; in a word, in any form rather than the right one, that of a professed and regular disquisition. And because the coarse buffoonery, and broad laugh, of the old and rude adversaries of the Christian faith, would offend the taste, perhaps, rather than the virtue, of this cultivated age, a graver irony, a more skilful and delicate banter, is substituted in their place. An eloquent historian, beside his more direct, and therefore fairer attacks upon the credibility of Evangelic story, has contrived to weave into his narration one continued sneer upon the cause of Christianity, and upon the writings and characters of its ancient patrons. The knowledge which this author possesses of the frame and conduct of the human mind, must have led him to observe, that such attacks do their execution without inquiry. Who can refute a *sneer?* Who can compute the number, much less, one by one, scrutinize the justice, of those disparaging insinuations which crowd the pages of this elaborate history? What reader suspends his curiosity, or calls off his attention from the principal narrative, to examine references, or to search into the foundation, or to weigh the reason, propriety, and force, of every transient sarcasm, and sly allusion, by which the Christian testimony is depreciated and traduced: and by which, nevertheless, he may find his persuasion afterwards unsettled and perplexed?

But the enemies of Christianity have pursued her with poisoned arrows. Obscurity itself is made the vehicle of infidelity. The awful doctrines, if we be not permitted to call them the sacred truths, of our religion, together with all the adjuncts and appendages of its worship and external profession, have been sometimes impudently profaned by an unnatural conjunction with impure and lascivious images. The fondness for ridicule is almost universal: and ridicule, to many minds, is never so irresistible, as when seasoned with obscenity, and employed upon religion. But in proportion as these noxious principles take hold of the imagination, they infatuate the judgment: for trains of ludicrous and unchaste associations adhering to every sentiment and mention of religion, render the mind indisposed to receive either conviction from its evidence, or impressions from its authority. And this effect being exerted upon the sensitive part of our frame, is altogether independent of argument, proof, or reason; is as formidable to a true religion, as to a false one; to a well grounded faith, as to a chimerical mythology, or fabulous tradition. Neither, let it be observed, is the crime or danger less, because impure ideas are exhibited under a veil, in covert and chastised language.

Seriousness is not constraint of thought; nor levity, freedom. Every mind which wishes the advancement of truth and knowledge, in the most important of all human researches, must abhor this licentiousness, as violating no less the laws of reasoning, than the rights of decency. There is but one description of men, to whose principles it ought to be tolerable; I mean that class of reasoners who can see *little* in Christianity, even supposing it to be true. To such adversaries we address this reflection—Had Jesus Christ delivered no other declaration than the following—"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation:"—he had pronounced a message of inestimable importance, and well worthy of that splendid apparatus of prophecy and miracles with which his mission was introduced and attested: a message in which the wisest of mankind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their inquiries. It is idle to say, that a future state had been discovered already:—it had been discovered as the Copernican system was,—it was one guess among many. He alone discovers, who *proves;* and no man can prove this point, but the teacher who testifies by miracles that his doctrine comes from God.

BOOK VI.

ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Origin of Civil Government.

GOVERNMENT, at first, was either patriarchal or military: *that* of a parent over his family, or of a commander over his fellow-warriors.

1. Paternal authority, and the order of domestic life, supplied the foundation of *civil government.* Did mankind spring out of the earth mature and independent, it would be found perhaps impossible to introduce subjection and subordination among them: but the condition of human infancy prepares men for society, by combining individuals into small communities, and by placing them from the beginning, under direction and control. A family contains the rudiments of an empire. The authority of one over many, and the disposition to govern and to be governed, are in this way incidental to the very nature, and coeval no doubt with the existence, of the human species.

Moreover, the constitution of families not only assists the formation of civil government, by the dispositions which it generates, but also furnishes the first steps of the process by which empires have been actually reared. A parent would retain a considerable part of his authority after his children were grown up, and had formed families of their own. The obedience of which they remembered not the beginning, would be considered as natural; and would scarcely, during the parent's life, be entirely or abruptly withdrawn. Here then we see the second stage in the progress of dominion. The first was, that of a parent over his young children; this, that of an ancestor presiding over his adult descendants.

Although the original progenitor was the centre of union to his posterity, yet it is not probable that the association would be immediately or altogether dissolved by his death. Connected by habits of intercourse and affection, and by some common rights, necessities, and interests, they would consider themselves as allied to each other in a nearer degree than to the rest of the species. Almost all would be sensible of an inclination to continue in the society in which they had been brought up; and experiencing, as they soon would do, many inconveniences from the absence of that authority which their common ancestor exercised, especially in deciding their disputes, and directing their operations in matters in which it was ne-

cessary to act in conjunction, they might be induced to supply his place by a formal choice of a successor; or rather might willingly, and almost imperceptibly, transfer their obedience to some one of the family, who by his age or services, or by the part he possessed in the direction of their affairs during the lifetime of the parent, had already taught them to respect his advice, or to attend to his commands; or lastly, the prospect of these inconveniences might prompt the first ancestor to appoint a successor; and his posterity, from the same motive, united with an habitual deference to the ancestor's authority, might receive the appointment with submission. Here then we have a tribe or clan incorporated under one chief. Such communities might be increased by considerable numbers, and fulfil the purposes of civil union without any other or more regular convention, constitution, or form of government, than what we have described. Every branch which was slipped off from the primitive stock, and removed to a distance from it, would in like manner take root, and grow into a separate clan. Two or three of these clans were frequently, we may suppose, united into one. Marriage, conquest, mutual defence, common distress, or more accidental coalitions, might produce this effect.

II. A second source of personal authority, and which might easily extend, or sometimes perhaps supersede, the patriarchal, is that which results from military arrangement. In wars, either of aggression or defence, manifest necessity would prompt those who fought on the same side to array themselves under one leader. And although their *leader* was advanced to this eminence for the purpose only, and during the operations, of a single expedition, yet his authority would not always terminate with the reasons for which it was conferred. A warrior who had led forth his tribe against their enemies, with repeated success, would procure to himself, even in the deliberations of peace, a powerful and permanent influence. If this advantage were added to the authority of the patriarchal chief, or favoured by any previous distinction of ancestry, it would be no difficult undertaking for the person who possessed it, to obtain the almost absolute direction of the affairs of the community; especially if he was careful to associate to himself proper auxiliaries, and content to practise the obvious art of gratifying or removing those who opposed his pretensions.

But although we may be able to comprehend how by his personal abilities or fortune one man may obtain the rule over many, yet it seems more difficult to explain how empire became *hereditary*, or in what manner sovereign power, which is never acquired without great merit or management, learns to descend in a succession which has no dependance upon any qualities either of understanding or activity. The causes which have introduced hereditary dominion into so general a reception in the world, are principally the following:—the influence of association, which communicates to the son a portion of the same respect which was wont to be paid to the virtues or station of the father; the mutual jealousy of other competitors; the greater envy with which all behold the exaltation of an equal, than the continuance of an acknowledged superiority; a reigning prince leaving behind him many adherents, who can preserve their own importance only by supporting the succession of his children: add to these reasons, that elections to the supreme power having, upon trial, produced destructive contentions, many states would take a refuge from a return of the same calamities in a rule of succession; and no rule presents itself so obvious, certain, and intelligible, as consanguinity of birth.

The ancient state of society in most countries, and the modern condition of some uncivilized parts of the world, exhibit that appearance which this account of the origin of civil government would lead us to expect. The earliest histories of Palestine, Greece, Italy, Gaul, Britain, inform us, that these countries were occupied by many small independent nations, not much perhaps unlike those which are found at present amongst the savage inhabitants of North America, and upon the coast of Africa. These nations I consider as the amplifications of so many single families; or as derived from the junction of two or three families, whom society in war, or the approach of some common danger, had united. Suppose a country to have been first peopled by shipwreck on its coasts, or by emigrants or exiles from a neighbouring country; the new settlers, having no enemy to provide against, and occupied with the care of their personal subsistence, would think little of digesting a system of laws, of contriving a form of government, or indeed of any political union whatever; but each settler would remain at the head of his own family, and each family would include all of every age and generation who were descended from him. So many of these families as were holden together after the death of the original ancestor, by the reasons and in the method above recited, would wax, as the individuals were multiplied, into tribes, clans, hordes, or nations, similar to those into which the ancient inhabitants of many countries are known to have been divided, and which are still found wherever the state of society and manners is immature and uncultivated.

Nor need we be surprised at the early existence in the world of some vast empires, or at the rapidity with which they advanced to their greatness, from comparatively small and obscure originals. Whilst the inhabitants of so many countries were broken into numerous communities, unconnected, and oftentimes contending with each other; before experience had taught these little states to see their own danger in their neighbour's ruin; or had instructed them in the necessity of resisting the aggrandizement of an aspiring power, by alliances, and timely preparations; in this condition of civil policy, a particular tribe, which by any means had gotten the start of the rest in strength or discipline, and happened to fall under the conduct of an ambitious chief, by directing their first attempts to the part where success was most secure, and by assuming, as they went along, those whom they conquered into a share of their future enterprises, might soon gather a force which would infallibly overbear any opposition that the scattered power and unprovided state of such enemies could make to the progress of their victories.

Lastly, our theory affords a presumption, that the earliest governments were monarchies; because the government of families, and of armies, from which, according to our account, civil government derived its institution, and probably its form, is universally monarchical.

CHAPTER II.

How Subjection to Civil Government is Maintained.

Could we view our own species from a distance, or regard mankind with the same sort of observation with which we read the natural history, or remark the *manners*, of any other animal, there is nothing in the human character which would more surprise us, than the almost universal subjugation of strength to weakness;—than to see many millions of robust men, in the complete use and exercise of their personal faculties, and without any defect of courage, waiting upon the will of a child, a woman, a driveller, or a lunatic. And although, when we suppose a vast empire in absolute subjection to one person, and that one depressed beneath the level of his species by infirmities, or vice, we suppose perhaps an extreme case: yet in all cases, even the most popular forms of civil government, *the physical strength resides in the governed.* In what manner opinion thus prevails over strength, or how power, which naturally belongs to superior force, is maintained in opposition to it; in other words, by what motives the many are induced to submit to the few, becomes an inquiry which lies at the root of almost every political speculation. It removes, indeed, but does not resolve, the difficulty, to say, that civil governments are now-a-days almost universally upholden by standing armies; for, the question still returns; How are these armies themselves kept in subjection, or made to obey the commands, and carry on the designs, of the prince or state which employs them?

Now, although we should look in vain for any *single* reason which will account for the general submission of mankind to civil government; yet it may not be difficult to assign for every class and character in the community, considerations powerful enough to dissuade each from any attempts to resist established authority. Every man has his motive, though not the same. In this, as in other instances, the conduct is similar, but the principles which produce it, extremely various.

There are three distinctions of character, into which the subjects of a state may be divided: into those who obey from prejudice; those who obey from reason; and those who obey from self interest.

I. They who obey from prejudice, are determined by an opinion of right in their governors; which opinion is founded upon *prescription.* In monarchies and aristocracies which are hereditary, the prescription operates in favour of particular families; in republics and elective offices, in favour of particular forms of government, or constitution. Nor is it to be wondered at, that mankind should reverence authority founded in prescription, when they observe that it is prescription which confers the title to almost every thing else. The whole course, and all the habits of civil life, favour this prejudice. Upon what other foundation stands any man's right to his estate? The right of primogeniture, the succession of kindred, the descent of property, the inheritance of honours, the demand of tithes, tolls, rents, or services, from the estates of others, the right of way, the powers of office and magistracy, the privileges of nobility, the immunities of the clergy, upon what are they all founded, in the apprehension at least of the multitude, but upon prescription? To what else, when the claims are contested, is the appeal made? It is natural to transfer the same principle to the affairs of government, and to regard those exertions of power which have been long exercised and acquiesced in, as so many *rights* in the sovereign; and to consider obedience to his commands, within certain accustomed limits, as enjoined by that rule of conscience, which requires us to render to every man his due.

In hereditary monarchies, the *prescriptive title* is corroborated, and its influence considerably augmented by an accession of religious sentiments, and by that sacredness which men are wont to ascribe to the persons of princes. Princes themselves have not failed to take advantage of this disposition, by claiming a superior dignity, as it were, of nature, or a peculiar delegation from the Supreme Being.—For this purpose were introduced the titles of Sacred Majesty, of God's Anointed, Representative, Vicegerent, together with the ceremonies of investitures and coronations, which are calculated not so much to recognize the authority of sovereigns, as to consecrate their persons. Where a fabulous religion permitted it, the public veneration has been challenged by bolder pretensions. The Roman emperors usurped the titles and arrogated the worship of gods. The mythology of the heroic ages, and of many barbarous nations, was easily converted to this purpose. Some princes, like the heroes of Homer, and the founder of the Roman name, derived their birth from the gods; others, with Numa, pretended a secret communication with some divine being; and others, again, like the incas of Peru, and the ancient Saxon kings, extracted their descent from the deities of their countries. The Lama of Thibet, at this day, is held forth to his subjects, not as the offspring or successor of a divine race of princes, but as the immortal God himself, the object at once of civil obedience and religious adoration. This instance is singular, and may be accounted the farthest point to which the abuse of human credulity has ever been carried. But in all these instances the purpose was the same,—to engage the reverence of mankind, by an application to their religious principles.

The reader will be careful to observe that, in this article, we denominate every opinion, whether true or false, a *prejudice*, which is not founded upon argument, in the mind of the person who entertains it.

II. They who obey from *reason*, that is to say, from conscience as instructed by reasonings and conclusions of their own, are determined by the consideration of the necessity of some government or other; the certain mischief of civil commotions; and the danger of re-settling the government of their country better, or at all, if once subverted or disturbed.

III. They who obey from *self-interest*, are kept in order by want of leisure; by a succession of private cares, pleasures, and engagements; by contentment, or a sense of the ease, plenty, and safety, which they enjoy; or lastly, and principally, by fear, foreseeing that they would bring themselves by resistance into a worse situation than their present, inasmuch as the strength of government, each discontented subject reflects, is greater than his own, and he knows not that others would join him.

This last consideration has often been called *opinion of power*.

This account of the principles by which mankind are retained in their obedience to civil government, may suggest the following cautions.

1. Let civil governors learn hence to respect their subjects; let them be admonished, that *the physical strength resides in the governed;* that this strength wants only to be felt and roused, to lay prostrate the most ancient and confirmed dominion; that civil authority is founded in opinion; that general opinion therefore ought always to be treated with deference, and managed with delicacy and circumspection.

2. *Opinion of right*, always following *the custom*, being for the most part founded in nothing else, and lending one principal support to government, every innovation in the constitution, or in other words, in the custom of governing, diminishes the stability of government. Hence some absurdities are to be retained, and many small inconveniencies endured in every country, rather than that usage should be violated, or the course of public affairs diverted from their old and smooth channel. Even *names* are not indifferent.—When the multitude are to be dealt with, there is a *charm* in sounds. It was upon this principle, that several statesmen of those times advised Cromwell to assume the title of king, together with the ancient style and insignia of royalty. The minds of many, they contended, would be brought to acquiesce in the authority of a king, who suspected the office, and were offended with the administration, of a protector. Novelty reminded them of usurpation. The adversaries of this design opposed the measure, from the same persuasion of the efficacy of names and forms, jealous lest the veneration paid to these, should add an influence to the new settlement which might ensnare the liberty of the commonwealth.

3. *Government may be too secure.* The greatest tyrants have been those, whose titles were the most unquestioned. Whenever therefore the opinion of right becomes too predominant and superstitious, it is abated by *breaking the custom.* Thus the Revolution broke the *custom of succession*, and thereby moderated, both in the prince and in the people, those lofty notions of hereditary right, which in the one were become a continual incentive to tyranny, and disposed the other to invite servitude, by undue compliances and dangerous concessions.

4. As ignorance of union, and want of communication, appear amongst the principal preservatives of civil authority, it behoves every state to keep its subjects in this want and ignorance, not only by vigilance in guarding against actual confederacies and combinations, but by a timely care to prevent great collections of men of any separate party or religion, or of like occupation or profession, or in any way connected by a participation of interest or passion, from being assembled in the same vicinity. A protestant establishment in this country may have little to fear from its popish subjects, scattered as they are throughout the kingdom, and intermixed with the protestant inhabitants, which yet might think them a formidable body, if they were gathered together into one county. The most frequent and desperate riots are those which break out amongst men of the same profession, as weavers, miners, sailors. This circumstance makes a mutiny of soldiers more to be dreaded than any other insurrection. Hence also one danger of an overgrown metropolis, and of those great cities and crowded districts, into which the inhabitants of trading countries are commonly collected. The worst effect of popular tumults consists in this, that they discover to the insurgents the secret of their own strength, teach them to depend upon it against a future occasion, and both produce and diffuse sentiments of confidence in one another, and assurances of mutual support. Leagues thus formed and strengthened, may overawe or overset the power of any state; and the danger is greater, in proportion as, from the propinquity of habitation and intercourse of employment, the passions and counsels of a party can be circulated with ease and rapidity. It is by these means, and in such situations, that the minds of men are so affected and prepared, that the most dreadful uproars often arise from the slightest provocations.—When the train is laid, a spark will produce the explosion.

CHAPTER III.

The Duty of Submission to Civil Government Explained.

THE subject of this chapter is sufficiently distinguished from the subject of the last, as the motives which actually produce civil obedience, may be and often are, very different from the reasons which make that obedience a duty.

In order to prove civil obedience to be a moral duty, and an obligation upon the conscience, it hath been usual with many political writers (at the head of whom we find the venerable name of Locke,) to state a compact between the citizen and the state, as the ground and cause of the relation between them: which compact, binding the parties for the same general reason that private contracts do, resolves the duty of submission to civil government into the universal obligation of fidelity in the performance of promises. This compact is twofold:

First, an *express* compact by the primitive founders of the state, who are supposed to have convened for the declared purpose of settling the terms of their political union, and a future constitution of government. The whole body is supposed, in the first place, to have unanimously consented to be bound by the resolutions of the majority; that majority, in the next place, to have fixed certain fundamental regulations: and then to have constituted, either in one person, or in an assembly (the rule of succession, or appointment, being at the same time determined,) a *standing legislature*, to whom, under these pre-established restrictions, the government of the state was thence forward committed, and whose laws the several members of the convention were, by their first undertaking, thus personally engaged to obey.—This transaction is sometimes called the *social compact*, and these supposed original regulations compose what are meant by the *constitution*, the *fundamental laws of the constitution;* and form, on one side, the *inherent indefeasible prerogative of the crown;* and, on the other, the unalienable, imprescriptible *birth-right* of the subject.

Secondly, A *tacit* or *implied* compact, by all succeeding members of the state, who by accept-

ing its protection, consent to be bound by its laws; in like manner, as whoever *voluntarily enters* into a private society is understood, without any other or more explicit stipulation, to promise a conformity with the rules, and obedience to the government of that society, as the known conditions upon which he is admitted to a participation of its privileges.

This account of the subject, although specious, and patronized by names the most respectable, appears to labour under the following objections: that it is founded upon a supposition false in fact, and leading to dangerous conclusions.

No social compact, similar to what is here described, was ever made or entered into in reality: no such original convention of the people was ever actually holden, or in any country could be holden, antecedent to the existence of civil government in that country. It is to suppose it possible to call savages out of caves and deserts, to deliberate and vote upon topics, which the experience, and studies, and refinements, of civil life, alone suggest. Therefore no government in the universe *began* from this original. Some imitation of a social compact may have taken place at a *revolution*. The present age has been witness to a transaction, which bears the nearest resemblance to this political idea, of any of which history has preserved the account or memory: I refer to the establishment of the United States of North America. We saw the *people* assembled to elect deputies, for the avowed purpose of framing the constitution of a new empire. We saw this deputation of the people deliberating and resolving upon a form of government, erecting a permanent legislature, distributing the functions of sovereignty, establishing and promulgating a code of fundamental ordinances, which were to be considered by succeeding generations, not merely as laws and acts of the state, but as the very terms and conditions of the confederation; as binding not only upon the subjects and magistrates of the state, but as limitations of power, which were to control and regulate the future legislature. Yet even here much was presupposed. In settling the constitution, many important parts were presumed to be already settled. The qualifications of the constituents who were admitted to vote in the election of members of congress, as well as the mode of electing the representatives, were taken from the old forms of government. That was wanting, from which every social union should set off, and which alone makes the resolutions of the society the act of the individual,—the unconstrained consent of all to be bound by the decision of the majority; and yet without this previous consent, the revolt, and the regulations which followed it, were compulsory upon dissentients.

But the original compact, we are told, is not proposed as a *fact*, but as a fiction, which furnishes a commodious explication of the mutual rights and duties of sovereigns and subjects. In answer to this representation of the matter, we observe, that the original compact, if it be not a fact, is nothing; can confer no actual authority upon laws or magistrates; nor afford any foundation to rights which are supposed to be real and existing. But the truth is, that in the books, and in the apprehension, of those who deduce our civil rights and obligations *a pactis*, the original convention is appealed to and treated of as a reality. Whenever the disciples of this system speak of the constitution; of the fundamental articles of the constitution; of laws being constitutional or unconstitutional; of inherent, unalienable, inextinguishable rights, either in the prince or in the people; or indeed of any laws, usages, or civil rights, as transcending the authority of the subsisting legislature, or possessing a force and sanction superior to what belong to the modern acts and edicts of the legislature; they secretly refer us to what passed at the original convention. They would teach us to believe, that certain rules and ordinances were established by the people, at the same time that they settled the charter of government, and the powers as well as the form of the future legislature; that this legislature consequently, deriving its commission and existence from the consent and act of the primitive assembly (of which indeed it is only the standing deputation,) continues subject, in the exercise of its offices, and as to the extent of its power, to the rules, reservations, and limitations, which the same assembly then made and prescribed to it.

"As the first members of the state were bound by express stipulation to obey the government which they had erected; so the succeeding inhabitants of the country are understood to promise allegiance to the constitution and government they find established, by accepting its protection, claiming its privileges, and acquiescing in its laws; more especially, by the purchase or inheritance of lands to the possession of which, allegiance to the state is annexed, as the very service and condition of the tenure." Smoothly as this train of argument proceeds, little of it will endure examination. The native subjects of modern states are not conscious of any stipulation with the sovereigns, of ever exercising an election whether they will be bound or not by the acts of the legislature, of any alternative being proposed to their choice, of a promise either required or given; nor do they apprehend that the validity or authority of the law depends at all upon *their* recognition or consent. In all stipulations, whether they be expressed or implied, private or public, formal or constructive, the parties stipulating must both possess the liberty of assent and refusal, and also be conscious of this liberty; which cannot with truth be affirmed of the subjects of civil government as government is now, or ever was, actually administered. This is a defect, which no arguments can excuse or supply: all presumptions of consent, without this consciousness, or in opposition to it, are vain and erroneous. Still less is it possible to reconcile with any idea of stipulation, the practice, in which all European nations agree, of founding allegiance upon the circumstance of nativity, that is, of claiming and treating as subjects all those who are born within the confines of their dominions, although removed to another country in their youth or infancy. In this instance certainly, the state does not presume a compact. Also if the subject be bound only by his own consent, and if the voluntary abiding in the country be the proof and intimation of that consent, by what arguments should we defend the right, which sovereigns universally assume, of prohibiting, when they please, the departure of their subjects out of the realm?

Again, when it is contended that the taking and holding possession of land amounts to an acknowledgment of the sovereign, and a virtual promise of allegiance to his laws, it is necessary to the validity of the argument to prove, that the inhabitants

who first composed and constituted the state, collectively possessed a right to the soil of the country;—a right to parcel it out to whom they pleased, and to annex to the donation what conditions they thought fit. How came they by this right? An agreement amongst themselves would not confer it; that could only adjust what already belonged to them. A society of men vote themselves to be the owners of a region of the world;—does that vote, unaccompanied especially with any culture, enclosure, or proper act of occupation, make it theirs? does it entitle them to exclude others from it, or to dictate the conditions upon which it shall be enjoyed? Yet this original collective right and ownership is the foundation for all the reasoning by which the duty of allegiance is inferred from the possession of land.

The theory of government which affirms the existence and the obligation of a social compact, would, after all, merit little discussion, and however groundless and unnecessary, should receive no opposition from us, did it not appear to lead to conclusions unfavourable to the improvement, and to the peace of human society.

1st. Upon the supposition that government was first erected by, and that it derives all its just authority from, resolutions entered into by a convention of the people, it is capable of being presumed, that many points were settled by that convention, anterior to the establishment of the subsisting legislature, and which the legislature, consequently has no right to alter, or interfere with. These points are called the *fundamentals* of the constitution: and as it is impossible to determine how many, or what, they are, the suggesting of any such serves extremely to embarrass the deliberations of the legislature, and affords a dangerous pretence for disputing the authority of the laws. It was this sort of reasoning (so far as reasoning of any kind was employed in the question) that produced in this nation the doubt, which so much agitated the minds of men in the reign of the second Charles, whether an Act of Parliament could of right alter or limit the succession of the Crown.

2dly. If it be by virtue of a compact, that the subject owes obedience to civil government, it will follow that he ought to abide by the form of government which he finds established, be it ever so absurd or inconvenient. He is bound by his bargain. It is not permitted to any man to retreat from his engagement, merely because he finds the performance disadvantageous, or because he has an opportunity of entering into a better. This law of contract, is universal: and to call the relation between the sovereign and the subjects a contract; yet not to apply to it the rules, or allow of the effects of a contract, is an arbitrary use of names, and an unsteadiness in reasoning, which can teach nothing. Resistance to the *encroachments* of the supreme magistrate may be justified on this principle; recourse to arms, for the purpose of bringing about an amendment of the constitution, never can. No form of government contains a provision for its own dissolution; and few governors will consent to the extinction, or even to any abridgement, of their own power. It does not therefore appear, how despotic governments can ever, in consistency with the obligation of the subject, be changed or mitigated. Despotism is the constitution of many states: and whilst a despotic prince exacts from his subjects the most rigorous servitude according to this account, he is only holding them to their agreement. A people may vindicate, by force, the rights which the constitution has left them; but every attempt to narrow the prerogative of the crown by *new* limitations, and in opposition to the will of the reigning prince, whatever opportunities may invite, or success follow it, must be condemned as an infraction of the compact between the sovereign and the subject.

3dly. Every violation of the compact on the part of the governor, releases the subject from his allegiance, and dissolves the government. I do not perceive how we can avoid this consequence, if we found the duty of allegiance upon compact, and confess any analogy between the social compact and other contracts. In private contracts, the violation and non-performance of the conditions, by one of the parties, vacates the obligation of the other. Now the terms and articles of the social compact being no where extant or expressed: the rights and offices of the administrator of an empire being so many and various; the imaginary and controverted line of his prerogative being so liable to be overstepped in one part or other of it; the position that every such transgression amounts to a forfeiture of the government, and consequently authorises the people to withdraw their obedience, and provide for themselves by a new settlement, would endanger the stability of every political fabric in the world, and has in fact always supplied the disaffected with a topic of seditious declamation. If occasions have arisen, in which this plea has been resorted to with justice and success, they have been occasions in which a revolution was defensible upon other and plainer principles. The plea itself is at all times captious and unsafe.

Wherefore, rejecting the intervention of a compact, as unfounded in its principle, and dangerous in the application, we assign for the only ground of the subject's obligation, THE WILL OF GOD AS COLLECTED FROM EXPEDIENCY.

The steps by which the argument proceeds, are few and direct.—"It is the will of God that the happiness of human life be promoted:"—this is the first step, and the foundation not only of this, but of every, moral conclusion. "Civil society conduces to that end:"—this is the second proposition. "Civil societies cannot be upholden, unless, in each, the interest of the whole society be binding upon every part and member of it:"—this is the third step, and conducts us to the conclusion, namely, "that so long as the interest of the whole society requires it, that is, so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconveniency, it is the will of God (which *will* universally determines our duty) that the established government be obeyed,"—and no longer.

This principle being admitted, the justice of every particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the danger and grievance on the one side, and of the probability and expense of redressing it on the other.

But who shall judge this? We answer, "Every man for himself." In contentions between the sovereign and the subject, the parties acknowledge no common arbitrator; and it would be absurd to refer the decision to *those* whose conduct has provoked the question, and whose own interest, authority, and fate, are immediately concerned in it. The danger of error and abuse is no objection to the rule of expediency, because every other rule is liable

to the same or greater: and every rule that can be propounded upon the subject (like all rules indeed which appeal to, or bind the conscience) must in the application depend upon private judgment. It may be observed, however, that it ought equally to be accounted the exercise of a man's own private judgment, whether he be determined by reasonings and conclusions of his own, or submit to be directed by the advice of others, provided he be free to choose his guide.

We proceed to point out some easy but important inferences, which result from the substitution of *public expediency* into the place of all implied compacts, promises, or conventions, whatsoever.

I. It may be as much a duty, at one time, to resist government, as it is, at another, to obey it; to wit, whenever more advantage will, in our opinion, accrue to the community from resistance, than mischief.

II. The lawfulness of resistance, or the lawfulness of a revolt, does not depend alone upon the grievance which is sustained or feared, but also upon the probable expense and event of the contest. They who concerted the Revolution in England, were justifiable in their counsels, because, from the apparent disposition of the nation, and the strength and character of the parties engaged, the measure was likely to be brought about with little mischief or bloodshed; whereas it might have been a question with many friends of their country, whether the injuries then endured and threatened would have authorised the renewal of a doubtful civil war.

III. Irregularity in the first foundation of a state, or subsequent violence, fraud, or injustice, in getting possession of the supreme power, are not sufficient reasons for resistance, after the government is once peaceably settled. No subject of the British empire conceives himself engaged to vindicate the justice of the Norman claim or conquest, or apprehends that his duty in any manner depends upon that controversy. So, likewise, if the house of Lancaster, or even the posterity of Cromwell, had been at this day seated upon the throne of England, we should have been as little concerned to inquire how the founder of the family came there. No civil contests are so futile, although none have been so furious and sanguinary, as those which are excited by a disputed succession.

IV. Not every invasion of the subject's rights, or liberty, or of the constitution; not every breach of promise, or of oath; not every stretch of prerogative, abuse of power, or neglect of duty by the chief magistrate, or by the whole or any branch of the legislative body, justifies resistance, unless these crimes draw after them public consequences of sufficient magnitude to outweigh the evils of civil disturbance. Nevertheless, every violation of the constitution ought to be watched with jealousy, and resented as *such*, beyond what the quantity of estimable damage would require or warrant; because a known and settled usage of governing affords the only security against the enormities of uncontrolled dominion, and because this security is weakened by every encroachment which is made without opposition, or opposed without effect.

V. No usage, law, or authority whatsoever, is so binding, that it need or ought to be continued, when it may be changed with advantage to the community. The family of the prince, the order of succession, the prerogative of the crown, the form and parts of the legislature, together with the respective powers, office, duration, and mutual dependency, of the several parts, are all only so many *laws*, mutable like other laws, whenever expediency requires, either by the ordinary act of the legislature, or, if the occasion deserve it, by the interposition of the people. These points are wont to be approached with a kind of awe; they are represented to the mind as principles of the constitution settled by our ancestors, and, being settled, to be no more committed to innovation and debate; as foundations never to be stirred; as the terms and conditions of the social compact, to which every citizen of the state has engaged his fidelity, by virtue of a promise which he cannot now recall. Such reasons have no place in our system: to us, if there be any good reason for treating these with more deference and respect than other laws, it is either the advantage of the present constitution of government (which reason must be of different force in different countries,) or because in all countries it is of importance that the form and usage of governing be acknowledged and understood, as well by the governors as by the governed, and because, the seldomer it is changed, the more perfectly it will be known by both sides.

VI. As all civil obligation is resolved into expediency, what, it may be asked, is the difference between the obligation of an Englishman and a Frenchman? or why, since the obligation of both appears to be founded in the same reason, is a Frenchman bound in conscience to bear any thing from his king, which an Englishman would not be bound to bear? Their conditions may differ, but their *rights*, according to account, should seem to be equal: and yet we are accustomed to speak of the *rights*, as well as of the happiness of a free people, compared with what belong to the subjects of absolute monarchies; how, you will say, can this comparison be explained, unless we refer to a difference in the compacts by which they are respectively bound? —This is a fair question, and the answer to it will afford a farther illustration of our principles. We admit then that there are many things which a Frenchman is bound in conscience, as well as by coercion, to endure at the hands of his prince, to which an Englishman would not be obliged to submit: but we assert, that it is for these two reasons alone: *first*, because the same act of the prince is not the same grievance, where it is agreeable to the constitution, and where it infringes it; *secondly*, because redress in the two cases is not equally attainable. Resistance cannot be attempted with equal hopes of success, or with the same prospect of receiving support from others, where the people are reconciled to their sufferings, as where they are alarmed by innovation. In this way, and no otherwise, the subjects of different states possess different civil rights; the duty of obedience is defined by different boundaries; and the point of justifiable resistance placed at different parts of the *scale* of suffering; all which is sufficiently intelligible without a social compact.

VII. "The interest of the whole society is binding upon every part of it. No rule, short of this, will provide for the stability of civil government, or for the peace and safety of social life.

Wherefore, as individual members of the state are not permitted to pursue their emolument to the prejudice of the community, so is it equally a consequence of this rule, that no particular colony, province, town, or district, can justly concert measures for their separate interest, which shall appear at the same time to diminish the *sum* of prosperity. I do not mean, that it is necessary to the justice of a measure, that it profit each and every part of the community, (for, as the happiness of the whole may be increased, whilst that of some parts is diminished, it is possible that the conduct of one part of an empire may be detrimental to some other part, and yet just, provided one part gain more in happiness than the other part loses, so that the common weal be augmented by the change;) but what I affirm is, that these counsels can never be reconciled with the obligations resulting from civil union, which cause the *whole* happiness of the society to be impaired for the conveniency of a *part*. This conclusion is applicable to the question of right between Great Britain and her revolted colonies. Had I been an American, I should not have thought it enough to have had it even demonstrated, that a separation from the parent state would produce effects beneficial to America; my relation to that state imposed upon me a further inquiry, namely, whether the whole happiness of the empire was likely to be promoted by such a measure: not indeed the happiness of every part; that was not necessary, nor to be expected; but whether what Great Britian would lose by the separation, was likely to be compensated to the joint stock of happiness, by the advantages which America would receive from it. The contested claims of sovereign states and their remote dependencies, may be submitted to the adjudication of this rule with mutual safety. A public advantage is measured by the advantage which each individual receives, and by the number of those who receive it. A public evil is compounded of the same proportions. Whilst, therefore, a colony is small, or a province thinly inhabited, if a competition of interests arises between the original country and their acquired dominions, the former ought to be preferred; because it is fit that, if one must necessarily be sacrificed, the less give place to the greater; but when, by an increase of population, the interest of the provinces begins to bear a considerable proportion to the *entire* interest of the community, it is possible that they may suffer so much by their subjection, that not only theirs, but the whole happiness of the empire, may be obstructed by their union. The rule and principle of the calculation being still the same, the *result* is different: and this difference begets a new situation, which entitles the subordinate parts of the states to more equal terms of confederation, and if these be refused, to independency.

CHAPTER IV.

The Duty of Civil Obedience, as stated in the Christian Scriptures.

We affirm that, as to the *extent* of our civil rights and obligations, *Christianity* hath left us where she found us; that she hath neither altered it nor ascertained it; that the New Testament contains not one passage, which, fairly interpreted, affords either argument or objection applicable to any conclusions upon the subject, that are deduced from the law and religion of nature.

The only passages which have been seriously alleged in the controversy, or which it is necessary for us to state and examine, are the two following: the one extracted from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the other from the First General Epistle of St. Peter:—

ROMANS xiii. 1—7.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour."

1 PETER ii. 13—18.

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."

To comprehend the proper import of these instructions, let the reader reflect, that upon the subject of civil obedience there are two questions: the first, whether to obey government be a moral duty and obligation upon the conscience at all; the second, how far, and to what cases, that obedience ought to extend? that these two questions are so distinguishable in the imagination, that it is possible to treat of the one, without any thought of the other; and lastly, that if expressions which relate to one of these questions be transferred and applied to the other, it is with great danger of giving them a signification very different from the author's meaning. This distinction is not only possible, but natural. If I met with a person who appeared to entertain doubts, whether civil obedience were a moral duty which ought to be voluntarily discharged, or whether it were not a mere submission to force, like that which we yield to a robber who holds a pistol to our breast, I should represent to him the use and offices of civil government, the end and the necessity of civil subjection; or, if I preferred a different theory, I should explain to him the social compact, urge him with the obligation and the equity of his implied promise and tacit consent to be governed by the laws of the state from which he received protection; or I should argue, perhaps, that Nature herself dictated the law of subordination, when

she planted within us an inclination to associate with our species, and framed us with capacities so various and unequal. From whatever principle I set out, I should labour to infer from it this conclusion, "That obedience to the state is to be numbered among the relative duties of human life, for the transgression of which we shall be accountable at the tribunal of Divine justice, whether the magistrate be able to punish us for it or not;" and being arrived at this conclusion, I should stop, having delivered the conclusion itself, and throughout the whole argument expressed the obedience, which I inculcated, in the most general and unqualified terms; all reservations and restrictions being superfluous, and foreign to the doubt I was employed to remove.

If, in a short time afterwards, I should be accosted by the same person, with complaints of public grievances, of exorbitant taxes, of acts of cruelty and oppression, of tyrannical encroachments upon the ancient or stipulated rights of the people, and should be consulted whether it were lawful to revolt, or justifiable to join in an attempt to shake off the yoke by open resistance; I should certainly consider myself as having a case and question before me very different from the former. I should now define and discriminate. I should reply, that if public expediency be the foundation, it is also the measure, of civil obedience: that the obligation of subjects and sovereigns is reciprocal; that the duty of allegiance, whether it be founded in utility or compaët, is neither unlimited nor unconditional; that peace may be purchased too dearly; that patience becomes culpable pusillanimity, when it serves only to encourage our rulers to increase the weight of our burthen, or to bind it the faster; that the submission which surrenders the liberty of a nation, and entails slavery upon future generations, is enjoined by no law of rational morality; finally, I should instruct the inquirer to compare the peril and expense of his enterprise with the effects it was expected to produce, and to make choice of the alternative by which not his own present relief or profit, but the whole and permanent interest of the state, was likely to be best promoted. If any one who had been present at both these conversations should upbraid me with change or inconsistency of opinion, should retort upon me the passive doctrine which I before taught, the large and absolute terms in which I then delivered lessons of obedience and submission, I should account myself unfairly dealt with. I should reply, that the only difference which the language of the two conversations presented was, that I added now many exceptions and limitations, which were omitted or unthought of then: that this difference arose naturally from the two occasions, such exceptions being as necessary to the subject of our present conference, as they would have been superfluous and unseasonable in the former.

Now the difference in these two conversations is precisely the distinction to be taken in interpreting those passages of Scripture, concerning which we are debating. They inculcate the *duty*, they do not describe the *extent* of it. They enforce the obligation by the proper sanctions of Christianity, without intending either to enlarge or contract, without considering, indeed, the limits by which it is bounded. This is also the method in which the same apostles enjoin the duty of servants to their masters, of children to their parents, of wives to their husbands: "Servants, be subject to your masters."—"Children, obey your parents in all things."—"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands." The same concise and absolute form of expression occurs in all these precepts; the same silence as to any exceptions or distinctions: yet no one doubts that the commands of masters, parents, and husbands, are often so immoderate, unjust, and inconsistent with other obligations, that they both may and ought to be resisted. In letters or dissertations written professedly upon separate articles of morality, we might with more reason have looked for a precise delineation of our duty, and some degree of modern accuracy in the rules which were laid down for our direction: but in those short collections of practical maxims which compose the conclusion, or some small portion, of a doctrinal or perhaps controversial epistle, we cannot be surprised to find the author more solicitous to impress the duty, than curious to enumerate exceptions.

The consideration of this distinction is alone sufficient to vindicate these passages of Scripture from any explanation which may be put upon them, in favour of an unlimited passive obedience. But if we be permitted to assume a supposition which many commentators proceed upon as a certainty, that the first Christians privately cherished an opinion, that their conversion to Christianity entitled them to new immunities, to an exemption as of *right* (however they might give way to necessity,) from the authority of the Roman sovereign; we are furnished with a still more apt and satisfactory interpretation of the apostles' words. The two passages apply with great propriety to the refutation of this error: they teach the Christian convert to obey the magistrate "for the Lord's sake;"—"not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake;"—"that there is no power but of God;"—"that the powers that be," even the present rulers of the Roman empire, though heathens and usurpers, seeing they are in possession of the actual and necessary authority of civil government, "are ordained of God;" and, consequently, entitled to receive obedience from those who profess themselves the peculiar servants of God, in a greater (certainly not in a less) degree than from any others. They briefly describe the office of "civil governors, the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well;" from which description of the use of government, they justly infer the duty of subjection; which duty, being as extensive as the reason upon which it is founded, belongs to Christians, no less than to the heathen members of the community. If it be admitted, that the two apostles wrote with a view to this particular question, it will be confessed, that their words cannot be transferred to a question totally different from this, with any certainty of carrying along with us their authority and intention. There exists no resemblance between the case of a primitive convert, who disputed the jurisdiction of the Roman government over a disciple of Christianity, and *his* who, acknowledging the general authority of the state over all its subjects, doubts whether that authority be not, in some important branch of it, so ill constituted or abused, as to warrant the endeavours of the people to bring about a reformation by force. Nor can we judge what reply the apostles would have made to this *second* question if it had been proposed to them, from any thing they have de-

livered upon the *first;* any more than, in the two consultations above described, it could be known beforehand what I would say in the latter, from the answer which I gave the former.

The only defect to this account is, that neither the Scriptures, nor any subsequent history of the early ages of the Church, furnish any direct attestation of the existence of such disaffected sentiments amongst the primitive converts. They supply indeed some circumstances which render probable the opinion, that extravagant notions of the political rights of the Christian state were at that time entertained by many proselytes to the religion.—From the question proposed unto Christ, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" it may be presumed that doubts had been started in the Jewish schools concerning the obligation, or even the lawfulness, of submission to the Roman yoke. The accounts delivered by Josephus, of various insurrections of the Jews of that and the following age, excited by this principle, or upon this pretence, confirm the presumption. Now, as the Christians were at first chiefly taken from the Jews, confounded with them by the rest of the world, and, from the affinity of the two religions, apt to intermix the doctrines of both, it is not to be wondered at, that a tenet, so flattering to the self-importance of those who embraced it, should have been communicated to the new institution. Again, the teachers of Christianity, amongst the privileges which their religion conferred upon its professors, were wont to extol the "*liberty* into which they were called,"—"in which Christ had made them free." This liberty, which was intended of a deliverance from the various servitude, in which they had heretofore lived, to the domination of sinful passions, to the superstition of the Gentile idolatry, or the encumbered ritual of the Jewish dispensation, might by some be interpreted to signify an emancipation from all restraint which was imposed by an authority merely human. At least, they might be represented by their enemies as maintaining notions of this dangerous tendency. To some error or calumny of this kind, the words of St. Peter seem to allude:—"For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness (*i. e.* sedition,) but as the servants of God." After all, if any one think this conjecture too feebly supported by testimony, to be relied upon in the interpretation of Scripture, he will then revert to the considerations alleged in the preceding part of this chapter.

After so copious an account of what we apprehend to be the general design and doctrine of these much-agitated passages, little need be added an explanation of particular clauses. St. Paul has said, "Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." This phrase, "the ordinance of God," is by many so interpreted as to authorise the most exalted and superstitious ideas of the regal character. But surely, such interpreters have sacrificed truth to adulation. For, in the first place, the expression, as used by St. Paul, is just as applicable to one kind of government, and to one kind of succession, as to another;—to the elective magistrates of a pure republic, as to an absolute hereditary monarch. In the next place, it is not affirmed of the supreme magistrate exclusively, that *he* is the ordinance of God; the title, whatever it imports, belongs to every inferior officer of the state as much as to the highest. The divine right of *kings* is, like the divine right of other magistrates,—the law of the land, or even actual and quiet possession of their office;—a right ratified, we humbly presume, by the divine approbation, so long as obedience to their authority appears to be necessary or conducive to the common welfare. Princes are ordained of God by virtue only of that general decree by which he assents, and adds the sanction of his will, to every law of society which promotes his own purpose, the communication of human happiness; according to which idea of their origin and constitution (and without any repugnancy to the words of St. Paul,) they are by St. Peter denominated the *ordinance of man.*

CHAPTER V.

Of Civil Liberty.

Civil Liberty *is the not being restrained by any law, but what conduces in a greater degree to the public welfare.*

To do what we will, is natural liberty: to do what we will, consistently with the interest of the community to which we belong, is civil liberty; that is to say, the only liberty to be desired in a state of civil society.

I should wish, no doubt, to be allowed to act in every instance as I pleased, but I reflect that the rest also of mankind would then do the same; in which state of universal independence and self-direction, I should meet with so many checks and obstacles to my own will, from the interference and opposition of other men's, that not only my happiness, but my liberty, would be less, than whilst the whole community were subject to the dominion of equal laws.

The boasted liberty of a state of nature exists only in a state of solitude. In every kind and degree of union and intercourse with his species, it is possible that the liberty of the individual may be augmented by the very laws which restrain it; because he may gain more from the limitation of other men's freedom than he suffers by the diminution of his own. Natural liberty is the right of common upon a waste; civil liberty is the safe, exclusive, unmolested enjoyment of a cultivated enclosure.

The definition of civil liberty above laid down, imports that the laws of a free people impose no restraints upon the private will of the subject, which do not conduce in *a greater degree* to the public happiness; by which it is intimated, 1st, that restraint itself is an evil; 2dly, that this evil ought to be overbalanced by some public advantage; 3dly, that the proof of this advantage lies upon the legislature; 4thly, that a law being found to produce no sensible good effects, is a sufficient reason for repealing it, as adverse and injurious to the rights of a free citizen, without demanding specific evidence of its bad effects. This maxim might be remembered with advantage in a revision of many laws of this country; especially of the game-laws; of the poor-laws, so far as they lay restrictions upon the poor themselves; of the laws against Papists and Dissenters: and, amongst people enamoured to excess and jealous of their liberty, it seems a matter of surprise that this principle has been so imperfectly attended to.

The degree of actual liberty always bearing,

according to this account of it, a reversed proportion to the number and severity of the *restrictions* which are either useless, or the utility of which does not outweigh the evil of the restraint, it follows, that every nation possesses some, no nation perfect, liberty: that this liberty may be enjoyed under every form of government: that it may be impaired indeed, or increased, but that it is neither gained, nor lost, nor recovered, by any single regulation, change, or event whatever: that consequently, those popular phrases which speak of a free people; of a nation of slaves; which call one revolution the æra of liberty, or another the loss of it; with many expressions of a like absolute form; are intelligible only in a comparative sense.

Hence also we are enabled to apprehend the distinction between *personal* and *civil* liberty. A citizen of the freest republic in the world may be imprisoned for his crimes; and though his personal freedom be restrained by bolts and fetters, so long as his confinement is the effect of a beneficial public law, his civil liberty is not invaded. If this instance appear dubious, the following will be plainer. A passenger from the Levant, who, upon his return to England, should be conveyed to a lazaretto by an order of quarantine, with whatever impatience he might desire his enlargement, and though he saw a guard placed at the door to oppose his escape, or even ready to destroy his life if he attempted it, would hardly accuse government of encroaching upon his civil freedom; nay, might, perhaps, be all the while congratulating himself that he had at length set his foot again in a land of liberty. The manifest expediency of the measure not only justifies it, but reconciles the most odious confinement with the perfect possession, and the loftiest notions, of civil liberty. And if this be true of the coercion of a prison, that it is compatible with a state of *civil* freedom, it cannot with reason be disputed of those more moderate constraints which the ordinary operation of government imposes upon the will of the individual. It is not the rigour, but the inexpediency of laws and acts of authority, which makes them tyrannical.

There is another idea of civil liberty, which, though neither so simple nor so accurate as the former, agrees better with the signification, which the usage of common discourse, as well as the example of many respectable writers upon the subject, has affixed to the term. This idea places liberty in security; making it to consist not merely in an actual exemption from the constraint of useless and noxious laws and acts of dominion, but in being free from the *danger* of having such hereafter imposed or exercised. Thus, speaking of the political state of modern Europe, we are accustomed to say of Sweden, that she hath lost her *liberty* by the revolution which lately took place in that country; and yet we are assured that the people continue to be governed by the same laws as before, or by others which are wiser, milder, and more equitable. What then have they lost? They have lost the power and functions of their diet; the constitution of their states and orders, whose deliberations and concurrence were required in the formation and establishment of every public law; and thereby have parted with the security which they possessed against any attempts of the crown to harass its subjects, by oppressive and useless exertions of prerogative. The loss of this security we denominate the loss of liberty. They have changed, not their laws, but their legislature; not their enjoyment, but their safety; not their present burthens, but their prospects of future grievances; and this we pronounce a change from the condition of freemen to that of slaves. In like manner, in our own country, the act of parliament, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, which gave to the king's proclamation the force of law, has properly been called a complete and formal surrender of the liberty of the nation; and would have been so, although no proclamation were issued in pursuance of these new powers, or none but what was recommended by the highest wisdom and utility. The security was gone. Were it probable that the welfare and accommodation of the people would be as studiously, and as providently, consulted in the edicts of a despotic prince, as by the resolutions of a popular assembly, then would an absolute form of government be no less free than the purest democracy. The different degree of care and knowledge of the public interest, which may reasonably be expected from the different form and composition of the legislature, constitutes the distinction, in respect of liberty, as well between these two extremes, as between all the intermediate modifications of civil government.

The definitions which have been framed of civil liberty, and which have become the subject of much unnecessary altercation, are most of them adapted to this idea. Thus one political writer makes the very essence of the subject's liberty to consist in his being governed by no laws but those to which he hath actually consented; another is satisfied with an indirect and virtual consent; another, again, places civil liberty in the separation of the legislative and executive offices of government; another, in the being governed by *law*; that is, by known, preconstituted, inflexible rules of action and adjudication; a fifth, in the exclusive right of the people to tax themselves by their own representatives; a sixth, in the freedom and purity of elections of representatives; a seventh, in the control which the democratic party of the constitution possesses over the military establishment. Concerning which, and some other similar accounts of civil liberty, it may be observed, that they all labour under one inaccuracy, viz. that they describe not so much liberty itself, as the safeguards and preservatives of liberty: for example, a man's being governed by no laws but those to which he has given his consent, were it practicable, is no otherwise necessary to the enjoyment of civil liberty, than as it affords a probable security against the dictation of laws imposing superfluous restrictions upon his private will. This remark is applicable to the rest. The diversity of these definitions will not surprise us, when we consider that there is no contrariety or opposition amongst them whatever: for, by how many different provisions and precautions civil liberty is fenced and protected, so many different accounts of liberty itself, all sufficiently consistent with truth and with each other, may, according to this mode of explaining the term, be framed and adopted.

Truth cannot be offended by a definition, but propriety may. In which view, those definitions of liberty ought to be rejected, which, by making that essential to civil freedom which is unattainable in experience, inflame expectations that can never be gratified, and disturb the public content with complaints, which no wisdom or benevolence of government can remove.

It will not be thought extraordinary, that an idea, which occurs so much oftener as the subject of panegyric and careless declamation, than of just reasoning or correct knowledge, should be attended with uncertainty and confusion; or that it should be found impossible to contrive a definition, which may include the numerous, unsettled, and ever-varying significations, which the term is made to stand for, and at the same time accord with the condition and experience of social life.

Of the two ideas that have been stated of civil liberty, whichever we assume, and whatever reasoning we found upon them, concerning its extent, nature, value, and preservation, this is the conclusion;—that *that* people, government, and constitution, is the *freest*, which makes the best provision for the enacting of expedient and salutary laws.

CHAPTER VI.

Of different Forms of Government.

As a series of appeals must be finite, there necessarily exists in every government a power from which the constitution has provided no appeal; and which power, for that reason, may be termed absolute, omnipotent, uncontrollable, arbitrary, despotic; and is alike so in all countries.

The person, or assembly, in whom this power resides, is called the *sovereign*, or the supreme power of the state.

Since to the same power universally appertains the office of establishing public laws, it is called also the *legislature* of the state.

A government receives its denomination from the form of the legislature; which form is likewise what we commonly mean by the *constitution* of a country.

Political writers enumerate three principal forms of government, which, however, are to be regarded rather as the simple forms, by some combination and intermixture of which all actual governments are composed, than as any where existing in a pure and elementary state. These forms are,

I. Despotism, or absolute MONARCHY, where the legislature is in a single person.

II. An ARISTOCRACY, where the legislature is in a select assembly, the members of which either fill up by election the vacancies in their own body, or succeed to their places in it by inheritance, property, tenure of certain lands, or in respect of some personal right, or qualification.

III. A REPUBLIC, or democracy, where the people at large, either collectively or by representation, constitute the legislature.

The separate advantages of MONARCHY, are, unity of counsel, activity, decision, secrecy, despatch; the military strength and energy which result from these qualities of government; the exclusion of popular and aristocratical contentions; the preventing, by a known rule of succession, of all competition for the supreme power; and thereby repressing the hopes, intrigues, and dangerous ambition of aspiring citizens.

The mischiefs, or rather the dangers, of MONARCHY are, tyranny, expense, exaction, military domination: unnecessary wars, waged to gratify the passions of an individual; risk of the character of the reigning prince; ignorance, in the governors, of the interests and accommodation of the people, and a consequent deficiency of salutary regulations; want of constancy and uniformity in the rules of government, and, proceeding from thence, insecurity of person and property.

The separate advantage of an ARISTOCRACY consists in the wisdom which may be expected from experience and education:—a permanent council naturally possesses experience; and the members who succeed to their places in it by inheritance, will, probably, be trained and educated with a view to the stations which they are destined by their birth to occupy.

The mischiefs of an ARISTOCRACY are, dissensions in the ruling orders of the state, which, from the want of a common superior, are liable to proceed to the most desperate extremities; oppression of the lower orders by the privileges of the higher, and by laws partial to the separate interest of the lawmakers.

The advantages of a REPUBLIC are, liberty, or exemption from needless restrictions; equal laws; regulations adapted to the wants and circumstances of the people; public spirit, frugality, averseness to war; the opportunities which democratic assemblies afford to men of every description, of producing their abilities and counsels to public observation, and the exciting thereby, and calling forth to the service of the commonwealth, the faculties of its best citizens.

The evils of a REPUBLIC are, dissension, tumults, faction; the attempts of powerful citizens to possess themselves of the empire; the confusion, rage, and clamour, which are the inevitable consequences of assembling multitudes, and of propounding questions of state to the discussion of the people; the delay and disclosure of public counsels and designs; and the imbecility of measures retarded by the necessity of obtaining the consent of numbers: lastly, the oppression of the provinces which are not admitted to a participation in the legislative power.

A *mixed* government is composed by the combination of two or more of the simple forms of government above described:—and in whatever proportion each form enters into the constitution of a government, in the same proportion may both the advantages and evils, which we have attributed to that form, be expected: that is, those are the uses to be maintained and cultivated in each part of the constitution, and these are the dangers to be provided against in each. Thus, if secrecy and despatch be truly enumerated amongst the separate excellencies of regal government, then a mixed government, which retains monarchy in one part of its constitution, should be careful that the other estates of the empire do not, by an officious and inquisitive interference with the executive functions, which are, or ought to be, reserved to the administration of the prince, interpose delays, or divulge what it is expedient to conceal. On the other hand, if profusion, exaction, military domination, and needless wars, be justly accounted natural properties of monarchy, in its simple unqualified form; then are these the objects to which, in a mixed government, the aristocratic and popular part of the constitution ought to direct their vigilance; the dangers against which they should raise and fortify their barriers; these are departments of sovereignty, over which a power of inspection and control ought to be deposited with the people.

The same observation may be repeated of all the other advantages and inconveniences which have

been ascribed to the several simple forms of government; and affords a rule whereby to direct the construction, improvements, and administration, of mixed governments—subjected however to this remark, that a quality sometimes results from the conjunction of two simple forms of government, which belongs not to the separate existence of either: thus corruption, which has no place in an absolute monarchy, and little in a pure republic, is sure to gain admission into a constitution which divides the supreme power between an executive magistrate and a popular council.

An *hereditary* MONARCHY is universally to be preferred to an *elective* monarchy. The confession of every writer on the subject of civil government, the experience of ages, the example of Poland, and of the papal dominions, seem to place this amongst the few indubitable maxims which the science of politics admits of. A crown is too splendid a prize to be conferred upon merit: the passions or interests of the electors exclude all consideration of the qualities of the competitors. The same observation holds concerning the appointments to any office which is attended with a great share of power or emolument. Nothing is gained by a popular choice, worth the dissensions, tumults, and interruption of regular industry, with which it is inseparably attended. Add to this, that a king, who owes his elevation to the event of a contest, or to any other cause than a fixed rule of succession, will be apt to regard one part of his subjects as the associates of his fortune, and the other as conquered foes. Nor should it be forgotten, amongst the advantages of an *hereditary* monarchy, that, as plans of national improvement and reform are seldom brought to maturity by the exertions of a single reign, a nation cannot attain to the degree of happiness and prosperity to which it is capable of being carried, unless an uniformity of counsels, a consistency of public measures and designs, be continued through a succession of ages. This benefit may be expected with greater probability where the supreme power descends in the same race, and where each prince succeeds, in some sort, to the aim, pursuits, and disposition of his ancestor, than if the crown, at every change, devolve upon a stranger, whose first care will commonly be to pull down what his predecessor had built up; and to substitute systems of administration, which must, in their turn, give way to the more favourite novelties of the next successor.

ARISTOCRACIES are of two kinds.—First, where the power of the nobility belongs to them in their collective capacity alone; that is, where, although the government reside in an assembly of the order, yet the members of that assembly separately and individually possess no authority or privilege beyond the rest of the community:—this describes the constitution of Venice. Secondly, where the nobles are severally invested with great personal power and immunities, and where the power of the senate is little more than the aggregated power of the individuals who compose it:—this is the constitution of Poland. Of these two forms of government, the first is more tolerable than the last; for, although the members of a senate should many, or even all of them, be profligate enough to abuse the authority of their stations in the prosecution of private designs, yet, not being all under a temptation to the same injustice, not having all the same end to gain, it would still be difficult to obtain the consent of a majority to any specific act of oppression which the iniquity of an individual might prompt him to propose: or if the will were the same, the power is more confined; one tyrant, whether the tyranny reside in a single person, or a senate, cannot exercise oppression at so many places, at the same time, as it may be carried on by the dominion of a numerous nobility over their respective vassals and dependants. Of all species of domination, this is the most odious: the freedom and satisfaction of private life are more constrained and harassed by it than by the most vexatious law, or even by the lawless will of an arbitrary monarch, from whose knowledge, and from whose injustice, the greatest part of his subjects are removed by their distance, or concealed by their obscurity.

Europe exhibits more than one modern example, where the people, aggrieved by the exactions, or provoked by the enormities, of their immediate superiors, have joined with the reigning prince in the overthrow of the aristocracy, deliberately exchanging their condition for the miseries of despotism. About the middle of the last century, the commons of Denmark, weary of the oppressions which they had long suffered from the nobles, and exasperated by some recent insults, presented themselves at the foot of the throne with a formal offer of their consent to establish unlimited dominion in the king. The revolution in Sweden, still more lately brought about with the acquiescence, not to say the assistance, of the people, owed its success to the same cause, namely, to the prospect of deliverance that it afforded from the tyranny which their nobles exercised under the old constitution. In England, the people beheld the depression of the barons, under the house of Tudor, with satisfaction, although they saw the crown acquiring thereby a power which no limitations that the constitution had then provided were likely to confine. The lesson to be drawn from such events, is this: that a mixed government, which admits a patrician order into its constitution, ought to circumscribe the personal privileges of the nobility, especially claims of hereditary jurisdiction and local authority, with a jealousy equal to the solicitude with which it wishes its own preservation: for nothing so alienates the minds of the people from the government under which they live, by a perpetual sense of annoyance and inconveniency, or so prepares them for the practices of an enterprising prince or a factious demagogue, as the abuse which almost always accompanies the existence of separate immunities.

Amongst the inferior, but by no means inconsiderable advantages of a DEMOCRATIC constitution, or of a constitution in which the people partake of the power of legislation, the following should not be neglected:

1. The direction which it gives to the education, studies, and pursuits, of the superior orders of the community. The share which this has in forming the public manners and national character, is very important. In countries, in which the gentry are excluded from all concern in the government, scarcely any thing is left which leads to advancement, but the profession of arms. They who do not addict themselves to this profession (and miserable must that country be, which constantly employs the military service of a great proportion of any order of its subjects!) are

commonly lost by the mere want of object and destination: that is, they either fall, without reserve, into the more sottish habits of animal gratification, or entirely devote themselves to the attainment of those futile arts and decorations which compose the business and recommendations of a court: on the other hand, where the whole, or any effective portion, of civil power is possessed by a popular assembly, more serious pursuits will be encouraged; purer morals, and in a more intellectual character, will engage the public esteem; those faculties which qualify men for deliberation and debate, and which are the fruit of sober habits, of early and long-continued application, will be roused and animated by the reward which, of all others, most readily awakens the ambition of the human mind—political dignity and importance.

II. Popular elections procure to the common people courtesy from their superiors. That contemptuous and overbearing insolence, with which the lower orders of the community are wont to be treated by the higher, is greatly mitigated where the people have something to give. The assiduity with which their favour is sought upon these occasions, serves to generate settled habits of condescension and respect; and as human life is more embittered by affronts than injuries, whatever contributes to procure mildness and civility of manners towards those who are most liable to suffer from a contrary behaviour, corrects, with the pride, in a great measure, the evil of inequality, and deserves to be accounted among the most generous institutions of social life.

III. The satisfactions which the people in free governments derive from the knowledge and agitation of political subjects; such as the proceedings and debates of the senate; the conduct and characters of ministers; the revolutions, intrigues, and contentions of parties; and, in general, from the discussion of public measures, questions, and occurrences. Subjects of this sort excite just enough of interest and emotion to afford a moderate engagement to the thoughts, without rising to any painful degree of anxiety, or ever leaving a fixed operation upon the spirits;—and what is this, but the end and aim of all those amusements which compose so much of the business of life and of the value of riches? For my part (and I believe it to be the case with most men who are arrived at the middle age, and occupy the middle classes of life,) had I all the money which I pay in taxes to government, at liberty to lay out upon amusement and diversion, I know not whether I could make choice of any in which I could find greater pleasure than what I receive from expecting, hearing, and relating public news; reading parliamentary debates and proceedings; canvassing the political arguments, projects, predictions, and intelligence, which are conveyed by various channels, to every corner of the kingdom. These topics, exciting universal curiosity, and being such as almost every man is ready to form and prepared to deliver his opinion about, greatly promote, and, I think, improve conversation. They render it more rational and more innocent; they supply a substitute for drinking, gaming, scandal, and obscenity. Now the secrecy, the jealousy, the solitude, and precipitation, of despotic governments, exclude all this. But the loss, you say, is trifling. I know that it is possible to render even the mention of it ridiculous by representing it as the idle employment of the most insignificant part of the nation, the folly of village-statesmen and coffee-house politicians: but I allow nothing to be a trifle which ministers to the harmless gratification of multitudes; nor any order of men to be insignificant, whose number bears a respectable proportion to the sum of the whole community.

We have been accustomed to an opinion, that a REPUBLICAN form of government suits only with the affairs of a small state: which opinion is founded in the consideration, that unless the people, in every district of the empire, be admitted to a share in the national representation, the government is not, as to them, a republic; that elections, where the constituents are numerous, and dispersed through a wide extent of country, are conducted with difficulty, or rather, indeed, managed by the intrigues and combinations of a few, who are situated near the place of election, each voter considering his single suffrage as too minute a portion of the general interest to deserve his care or attendance, much less to be worth any opposition to influence and application; that whilst we contract the representation within a compass small enough to admit of orderly debate, the interest of the constituent becomes too small, of the representative too great. It is difficult also to maintain any connexion between them. He who represents two hundred thousand, is necessarily a stranger to the greatest part of those who elect him: and when his interest amongst them ceases to depend upon an acquaintance with their persons and character, or a care or knowledge of their affairs; when such a representative finds the treasures and honours of a great empire at the disposal of a few, and himself one of the few, there is little reason to hope that he will not prefer to his public duty those temptations of personal aggrandisement which his situation offers, and which the price of his vote will always purchase. All appeal to the people is precluded by the impossibility of collecting a sufficient proportion of their force and numbers. The factions and the unanimity of the senate are equally dangerous. Add to these considerations, that in a democratic constitution the mechanism is too complicated, and the motions too slow, for the operations of a great empire; whose defence and government require execution and despatch, in proportion to the magnitude, extent, and variety, of its concerns. There is weight, no doubt, in these reasons; but much of the objection seems to be done away by the contrivance of a *federal* republic, which, distributing the country into districts of a commodious extent, and leaving to each district its internal legislation, reserves to a convention of the states the adjustment of their relative claims; the levying, direction, and government, of the common force of the confederacy; the requisition of subsidies for the support of this force; the making of peace and war; the entering into treaties; the regulation of foreign commerce; the equalization of duties upon imports, so as to prevent the defrauding the revenue of one province by smuggling articles of taxation from the borders of another; and likewise so as to guard against undue partialities in the encouragement of trade. To what limits such a republic might, without inconveniency, enlarge its dominions, by assuming neighbouring provinces into the confederation; or how far it is capable of uniting the liberty of a small commonwealth with the safety of a powerful empire; or whether, amongst co-ordinate

powers, dissensions and jealousies would not be likely to arise, which, for want of a common superior, might proceed to fatal extremities; are questions upon which the records of mankind do not authorise us to decide with tolerable certainty. The experiment is about to be tried in America upon a large scale.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the British Constitution.

By the CONSTITUTION of a country, is meant so much of its law, as relates to the designation and form of the legislature; the rights and functions of the several parts of the legislative body; the construction, office, and jurisdiction, of courts of justice. The constitution is one principal division, section, or title, of the code of public laws; distinguished from the rest only by the superior importance of the subject of which it treats. Therefore the terms *constitutional* and *unconstitutional*, mean legal and illegal. The distinction and the ideas which these terms denote, are founded in the same authority with the law of the land upon any other subject; and to be ascertained by the same inquiries. In England, the system of public jurisprudence is made up of acts of parliament, of decisions of courts of law, and of immemorial usages; consequently, these are the principles of which the English constitution itself consists, the sources from which all our knowledge of its nature and limitations is to be deduced, and the authorities to which all appeal ought to be made, and by which every constitutional doubt and question can alone be decided. This plain and intelligible definition is the more necessary to be preserved in our thoughts, as some writers upon the subject absurdly confound what is constitutional with what is expedient; pronouncing forthwith a measure to be unconstitutional, which they adjudge in any respect to be detrimental or dangerous: whilst others, again, ascribe a kind of transcendant authority, or mysterious sanctity, to the constitution, as if it were founded in some higher original than that which gives force and obligation to the ordinary laws and statutes of the realm, or were inviolable on any other account than its intrinsic utility. An act of parliament in England can never be unconstitutional, in the strict and proper acceptation of the term; in a lower sense it may, viz. when it militates with the spirit, contradicts the analogy, or defeats the provision, of other laws, made to regulate the form of government. Even that flagitious abuse of their trust, by which a parliament of Henry the Eighth conferred upon the king's proclamation the authority of law, was unconstitutional only in this latter sense.

Most of those who treat of the British constitution, consider it as a scheme of government formally planned and contrived by our ancestors, in some certain era of our national history, and as set up in pursuance of such regular plan and design. Something of this sort is secretly supposed, or referred to, in the expressions of those who speak of the "principles of the constitution," of bringing back the constitution to its "first principles," of restoring it to its "original purity," or "primitive model." Now this appears to me an erroneous conception of the subject. No such plan was ever formed, consequently no such first principles, original model, or standard, exist: I mean, there never was a date or point of time in our history, when the government of England was to be set up anew, and when it was referred to any single person, or assembly, or committee, to frame a charter for the future government of the country; or when a constitution so prepared and digested, was by common consent received and established. In the time of the civil wars, or rather between the death of Charles the First and the restoration of his son, many such projects were published, but none were carried into execution. The Great Charter, and the Bill of Rights, were wise and strenuous efforts to obtain security against certain abuses of regal power, by which the subject had been formerly aggrieved: but these were, either of them, much too partial modifications of the constitution, to give it a new original. The constitution of England, like that of most countries of Europe, hath grown out of occasion and emergency; from the fluctuating policy of different ages; from the contentions, successes, interests, and opportunities, of different orders and parties of men in the community. It resembles one of those old mansions, which, instead of being built all at once, after a regular plan, and according to the rules of architecture at present established, has been reared in different ages of the art, has been altered from time to time, and has been continually receiving additions and repairs suited to the taste, fortune, or conveniency, of its successive proprietors. In such a building, we look in vain for the elegance and proportion, for the just order and correspondence of parts, which we expect in a modern edifice; and which external symmetry, after all, contributes much more perhaps to the amusement of the beholder, than the accommodation of the inhabitant.

In the British, and possibly in all other constitutions, there exists a wide difference between the actual state of the government and the theory. The one results from the other: but still they are different. When we contemplate the *theory* of the British government, we see the king invested with the most absolute personal impunity; with a power of rejecting laws, which have been resolved upon by both houses of parliament; of conferring by his charter, upon any set or succession of men he pleases, the privilege of sending representatives into one house of parliament, as by his immediate appointment he can place whom he will in the other. What is this, a foreigner might ask, but a more circuitous despotism? Yet, when we turn our attention from the legal extent, to the actual exercise of royal authority in England, we see these formidable prerogatives dwindled into mere ceremonies; and, in their stead, a sure and commanding influence, of which the constitution, it seems, is totally ignorant, growing out of that enormous patronage which the increased territory and opulence of the empire have placed in the disposal of the executive magistrate.

Upon questions of reform, the habit of reflection to be encouraged, is a sober comparison of the constitution under which we live,—not with models of speculative perfection, but with the actual chance of obtaining a better. This turn of thought will generate a political disposition, equally removed from that puerile admiration of

present establishments, which sees no fault, and can endure no change; and that distempered sensibility, which is alive only to perceptions of inconveniency, and is too impatient to be delivered from the uneasiness which it feels, to compute either the peril or expense of the remedy. Political innovations commonly produce many effects beside those that are intended. The direct consequence is often the least important. Incidental, remote, and unthought-of evil or advantages, frequently exceed the good that is designed, or the mischief that is foreseen. It is from the silent and unobserved operation, from the obscure progress of causes set at work for different purposes, that the greatest revolutions take their rise. When Elizabeth, and her immediate successor, applied themselves to the encouragement and regulation of trade by many wise laws, they knew not, that, together with wealth and industry, they were diffusing a consciousness of strength and independency, which would not long endure, under the forms of a mixed government, the dominion of arbitrary princes. When it was debated whether the mutiny act, the law by which the army is governed and maintained, should be temporary or perpetual, little else probably occurred to the advocates of an annual bill, than the expediency of retaining a control over the most dangerous prerogative of the crown,—the direction and command of a standing army; whereas, in its effect, this single reservation has altered the whole frame and quality of the British constitution. For since, in consequence of the military system which prevails in neighbouring and rival nations, as well as on account of the internal exigencies of government, a standing army has become essential to the safety and administration of the empire, it enables parliament, by discontinuing this necessary provision, so to enforce its resolutions upon any other subject, as to render the king's dissent to a law which has received the approbation of both houses, too dangerous an experiment any longer to be advised. A contest between the king and parliament, cannot now be persevered in without a dissolution of the government. Lastly, when the constitution conferred upon the crown the nomination to all employments in the public service, the authors of this arrangement were led to it, by the obvious propriety of leaving to a master the choice of his servants; and by the manifest inconveniency of engaging the national council, upon every vacancy, in those personal contests which attend elections to places of honour and emolument. Our ancestors did not observe that this disposition added an influence to the regal office, which, as the number and value of public employments increased, would supersede in a great measure the forms, and change the character, of the ancient constitution. They knew not, what the experience and reflection of modern ages have discovered, that patronage, universally, is power; that he who possesses in a sufficient degree the means of gratifying the desires of mankind after wealth and distinction, by whatever checks and forms his authority may be limited or disguised, will direct the management of public affairs. Whatever be the mechanism of the political engine, he will guide the motion. These instances are adduced in order to illustrate the proposition which we laid down, that, in politics, the most important and permanent effects have, for the most part, been incidental and unforeseen: and this proposition we inculcate, for the sake of the caution which teaches that changes ought not to be adventured upon without a *comprehensive* discernment of the consequences,—without a knowledge as well of the remote tendency, as of the immediate design. The courage of a statesman should resemble that of a commander, who, however regardless of personal danger, never forgets, that, with his own, he commits the lives and fortunes of a multitude; and who does not consider it as any proof of zeal or valour, to stake the safety of *other* men upon the success of a perilous or desperate enterprise.

There is one end of civil government peculiar to a good constitution, namely, the happiness of its subjects; there is another end essential to a good government, but common to it with many bad ones,—its own preservation. Observing that the best form of government would be defective, which did not provide for its own permanency, in our political reasonings we consider all such provisions as expedient; and are content to accept as a sufficient ground for a measure, or law, that it is necessary or conducive to the preservation of the constitution. Yet, in truth, such provisions are absolutely expedient, and such an excuse final, only whilst the constitution is worth preserving; that is, until it can be exchanged for a better. I premise this distinction, because many things in the English, as in every constitution, are to be vindicated and accounted for solely from their tendency to maintain the government in its present state, and the several parts of it in possession of the powers which the constitution has assigned to them; and because I would wish it to be remarked, that such a consideration is always subordinate to another,—the value and usefulness of the constitution itself.

The Government of England, which has been sometimes called a mixed government, sometimes a limited monarchy, is formed by a combination of the three regular species of government: the monarchy residing in the King; the aristocracy, in the House of Lords; and the republic, being represented by the House of Commons. The perfection intended by such a scheme of government is, to unite the advantages of the several simple forms, and to exclude the inconveniencies. To what degree this purpose is attained or attainable in the British constitution; wherein it is lost sight of or neglected; and by what means it may in any part be promoted with better success, the reader will be enabled to judge, by a separate recollection of these advantages and inconveniencies, as enumerated in the preceding chapter, and a distinct application of each to the political condition of this country. We will present our remarks upon the subject in a brief account of the expedients by which the British constitution provides,

1st, For the interest of its subjects.

2dly, For its own preservation.

The contrivances for the first of their purposes, are the following:

In order to promote the establishment of salutary public laws, every citizen of the state is capable of becoming a member of the senate: and every senator possesses the right of propounding to the deliberation of the legislature whatever law he pleases.

Every district of the empire enjoys the privilege of choosing representatives, informed of the in-

terests, and circumstances, and desires of their constituents, and entitled by their situation to communicate that information to the national council. The meanest subject has some one whom he can call upon to bring forward his complaints and requests to public attention.

By annexing the right of voting for members of the House of Commons to different qualifications in different places, each order and profession of men in the community become virtually represented; that is, men of all orders and professions, statesmen, courtiers, country-gentlemen, lawyers, merchants, manufacturers, soldiers, sailors, interested in the prosperity, and experienced in the occupation, of their respective professions, obtain seats in parliament.

The elections, at the same time, are so connected with the influence of landed property, as to afford a certainty that a considerable number of men of great estates will be returned to parliament; and are also so modified, that men the most eminent and successful in their respective professions, are the most likely, by their riches, or the weight of their stations, to prevail in these competitions.

The number, fortune, and quality, of the members; the variety of interests and characters amongst them; above all, the temporary duration of their power, and the change of men which every new election produces; are so many securities to the public, as well against the subjection of their judgments to any external dictation, as against the formation of a junto in their own body, sufficiently powerful to govern their decisions.

The representatives are so intermixed with the constituents, and the constituents with the rest of the people, that they cannot, without a partiality too flagrant to be endured, impose any burthen upon the subject, in which they do not share themselves; nor scarcely can they adopt an advantageous regulation, in which their own interests will not participate of the advantage.

The proceedings and debates of parliament, and the parliamentary conduct of each representative, are known by the people at large.

The representative is so far dependent upon the constituent, and political importance upon public favour, that a member of parliament cannot more effectually recommend himself to eminence and advancement in the state, than by contriving and patronizing laws of public utility.

When intelligence of the condition, wants, and occasions, of the people, is thus collected from every quarter; when such a variety of invention, and so many understandings, are set at work upon the subject; it may be presumed, that the most eligible expedient, remedy, or improvement, will occur to some one or other: and when a wise counsel, or beneficial regulation, is once suggested, it may be expected, from the disposition of an assembly so constituted as the British House of Commons is, that it cannot fail of receiving the approbation of a majority.

To prevent those destructive contentions for the supreme power, which are sure to take place where the members of the state do not live under an acknowledged head, and a known rule of succession; to preserve the people in tranquillity at home, by a speedy and vigorous execution of the laws; to protect their interest abroad, by strength and energy in military operations, by those advantages of decision, secrecy, and despatch, which belong to the resolutions of monarchical councils;—for these purposes, the constitution has committed the executive government to the administration and limited authority of an hereditary king.

In the defence of the empire; in the maintenance of its power, dignity, and privileges with foreign nations; in the advancement of its trade by treaties and conventions; and in the providing for the general administration of municipal justice, by a proper choice and appointment of magistrates; the inclination of the king and of the people usually coincides; in this part, therefore, of the regal office, the constitution entrusts the prerogative with ample powers.

The dangers principally to be apprehended from regal government, relate to the two articles *taxation* and *punishment*. In every form of government, from which the people are excluded, it is the interest of the governors to get as much, and of the governed to give as little, as they can: the power also of punishment, in the hands of an arbitrary prince, oftentimes becomes an engine of extortion, jealousy, and revenge. Wisely, therefore, hath the British constitution guarded the safety of the people, in these two points, by the most studious precautions.

Upon that of *taxation*, every law which, by the remotest construction, may be deemed to levy money upon the property of the subject, must originate, that is, must first be proposed and assented to, in the House of Commons: by which regulation, accompanying the weight which that assembly possesses in all its functions, the levying of taxes is almost exclusively reserved to the popular part of the constitution, who, it is presumed, will not tax themselves, nor their fellow-subjects, without being first convinced of the necessity of the aids which they grant.

The application also of the public supplies, is watched with the same circumspection as the assessment. Many taxes are annual; the produce of others is mortgaged, or appropriated to specific services: the expenditure of all of them is accounted for in the House of Commons; as computations of the charge of the purpose for which they are wanted, are previously submitted to the same tribunal.

In the infliction of *punishment*, the power of the crown, and of the magistrate appointed by the crown, is confined by the most precise limitations: the guilt of the offender must be pronounced by twelve men of his own order, indifferently chosen out of the county where the offence was committed: the punishment, or the limits to which the punishment may be extended, are ascertained, and affixed to the crime, by laws which know not the person of the criminal.

And whereas arbitrary or clandestine confinement is the injury most to be dreaded from the strong hand of the executive government, because it deprives the prisoner at once of protection and defence, and delivers him into the power, and to the malicious or interested designs, of his enemies; the constitution has provided against this danger with double solicitude. The ancient writ of habeas corpus, the last habeas-corpus act of Charles the Second, and the practice and determinations of our sovereign courts of justice founded upon

these laws, afford a complete remedy for every conceivable case of illegal imprisonment.*

Treason being that charge, under colour of which the destruction of an obnoxious individual is often sought; and government being at all times more immediately a party in the prosecution; the law, beside the general care with which it watches over the safety of the accused, in this case, sensible of the unequal contest in which the subject is engaged, has assisted his defence with extraordinary indulgences. By two statutes, enacted since the Revolution, every person indicted for high treason shall have a copy of his indictment, a list of the witnesses to be produced, and of the jury impannelled, delivered to him ten days before the trial; he is also permitted to make his defence by counsel:—privileges which are not allowed to the prisoner, in a trial for any other crime: and, what is of more importance to the party than all the rest, the testimony of two witnesses, at the least, is required to convict a person of treason; whereas, one positive witness is sufficient in almost every other species of accusation.

We proceed, in the second place, to inquire in what manner the constitution has provided for its own preservation; that is, in what manner each part of the legislature is secured in the exercise of the powers assigned to it, from the encroachments of the other parts. This security is sometimes called the *balance of the constitution:* and the political equilibrium, which this phrase denotes, consists in two contrivances;—a balance of power, and a balance of interest. By a balance of power is meant, that there is no power possessed by one part of the legislature, the abuse or excess of which is not checked by some antagonist power, residing in another part. Thus the power of the two houses of parliament to frame laws, is checked by the king's negative: that, if laws subversive of regal government should obtain the consent of parliament, the reigning prince, by interposing his prerogative, may save the necessary rights and authority of his station. On the other hand, the arbitrary application of this negative is checked by the privilege which parliament possesses, of refusing supplies of money to the exigencies of the king's administration. The constitutional maxim, "that the king can do no wrong," is balanced by another maxim, not less constitutional, "that the illegal commands of the king do not justify those who assist, or concur, in carrying them into execution;" and by a second rule, subsidiary to this, "that the acts of the crown acquire not a legal force, until authenticated by the subscription of some of its great officers." The wisdom of this contrivance is worthy of observation. As the king could not be punished, without a civil war, the constitution exempts his person from trial or account; but, lest this impunity should encourage a licentious exercise of dominion, various obstacles are opposed to the private will of the sovereign, when directed to illegal objects. The pleasure of the crown must be announced with certain solemnities, and attested by certain officers of state. In some cases, the royal order must be signified by a secretary of state; in others it must pass under the privy seal: and, in many, under the great seal. And when the king's command is regularly published, no mischief can be achieved by it, without the ministry and compliance of those to whom it is directed. Now all who either concur in an illegal order by authenticating its publication with their seal or subscription, or who in any manner assist in carrying it into execution, subject themselves to prosecution and punishment, for the part they have taken; and are not permitted to plead or produce the command of the king in justification of their obedience.* But farther: the power of the crown to direct the military force of the kingdom, is balanced by the annual necessity of resorting to parliament for the maintenance and government of that force. The power of the king to declare war, is checked by the privilege of the House of Commons, to grant or withhold the supplies by which the war must be carried on. The king's choice of his ministers is controlled by the obligation he is under of appointing those men to offices in the state, who are found capable of managing the affairs of his government, with the two houses of parliament. Which consideration imposes such a necessity upon the crown, as hath in a great measure subdued the influence of favouritism; insomuch that it is become no uncommon spectacle in this country, to see men promoted by the king to the highest offices and richest preferments which he has in his power to bestow, who have been distinguished by their opposition to his personal inclinations.

By the *balance of interest*, which accompanies and gives efficacy to the *balance of power*, is meant this;—that the respective interests of the three estates of the empire are so disposed and adjusted, that whichever of the three shall attempt any encroachment, the other two will unite in resisting it. If the king should endeavour to extend

* Upon complaint in writing by, or on behalf of, any person in confinement, to any of the four courts of Westminster-Hall, in term-time, or to the Lord Chancellor, or one of the Judges, in the vacation; and upon a probable reason being suggested to question the legality of the detention; a writ is issued to the person in whose custody the complainant is alleged to be, commanding him, within a certain limited and short time, to produce the body of the prisoner, and the authority under which he is detained. Upon the return of the writ, strict and instantaneous obedience to which is enforced by very severe penalties, if no lawful cause of imprisonment appear, the court or judge, before whom the prisoner is brought, is authorized and bound to discharge him; even though he may have been committed by a secretary, or other high officer of state, by the privy-council, or by the king in person: so that no subject of this realm can be held in confinement by any power, or under any pretence whatever, provided he can find means to convey his complaint to one of the four courts of Westminiter-Hall, or, during their recess, to any of the Judges of the same, unless all these several tribunals agree in determining his imprisonment to be legal. He may make application to them in succession; and if one out of the number be found, who thinks the prisoner entitled to his liberty, that one possesses authority to restore it to him.

* Amongst the checks which Parliament holds over the administration of public affairs, I forbear to mention the practice of addressing the king, to know by whose advice he resolved upon a particular measure; and of punishing the authors of that advice, for the counsel they had given. Not because I think this method either unconstitutional or improper; but for this reason,—that it does not so much subject the king to the control of Parliament, as it supposes him to be already in subjection. For if the king were so far out of the reach of the resentment of the House of Commons, as to be able with safety to refuse the information requested, or to take upon himself the responsibility inquired after, there must be an end of all proceedings founded in this mode of application.

his authority, by contracting the power and privileges of the Commons, the House of Lords would see their own dignity endangered by every advance which the crown made to independency upon the resolutions of parliament. The admission of arbitrary power is no less formidable to the grandeur of the aristocracy, than it is fatal to the liberty of the republic; that is, it would reduce the nobility from the hereditary share they possess in the national councils, in which their real greatness consists, to the being made a part of the empty pageantry of a despotic court. On the other hand, if the House of Commons should intrench upon the distinct province, or usurp the established prerogative of the crown, the House of Lords would receive an instant alarm from every new stretch of popular power. In every contest in which the king may be engaged with the representative body, in defence of his established share of authority, he will find a sure ally in the collective power of the nobility. An attachment to the monarchy, from which they derive their own distinction; the allurements of a court, in the habits and with the sentiments of which they have been brought up; their hatred of equality and of all levelling pretensions, which may ultimately affect the privileges, or even the existence, of their order; in short, every principle and every prejudice which are wont to actuate human conduct, will determine their choice to the side and support of the crown. Lastly, if the nobles themselves should attempt to revive the superiorities which their ancestors exercised under the feudal constitution, the king and the people would alike remember, how the one had been insulted, and the other enslaved, by that barbarous tyranny. They would forget the natural opposition of their views and inclinations, when they saw themselves threatened with the return of a domination which was odious and intolerable to both.

The reader will have observed, that in describing the British constitution, little notice has been taken of the House of Lords. The proper use and design of this part of the constitution, are the following: First, to enable the king, by his right of bestowing the peerage, to reward the servants of the public, in a manner most grateful to them, at a small expense to the nation: secondly, to fortify the power and to secure the stability of regal government, by an order of men naturally allied to its interests: and, thirdly, to answer a purpose, which, though of superior importance to the other two, does not occur so readily to our observation; namely, to stem the progress of popular fury. Large bodies of men are subject to sudden phrensies. Opinions are sometimes circulated amongst a multitude without proof or examination, acquiring confidence and reputation merely by being repeated from one to another; and passions founded upon these opinions, diffusing themselves with a rapidity which can neither be accounted for nor resisted, may agitate a country with the most violent commotions. Now the only way to stop the fermentation, is to divide the mass; that is, to erect different orders in the community, with separate prejudices and interests. And this may occasionally become the use of an hereditary nobility, invested with a share of legislation. Averse to those prejudices which actuate the minds of the vulgar; accustomed to condemn the clamour of the populace; disdaining to receive laws and opinions from their inferiors in rank; they will oppose resolutions which are founded in the folly and violence of the lower part of the community. Were the voice of the people always dictated by reflection; did every man, or even one man, in a hundred, think for himself, or actually consider the measure he was about to approve or censure; or even were the common people tolerably steadfast in the judgment which they formed, I should hold the interferences of a superior order not only superfluous, but wrong: for when every thing is allowed to difference of rank and education, which the actual state of these advantages deserves, that, after all, is most likely to be right and expedient, which appears to be so to the separate judgment and decision of a great majority of the nation; at least, that, in general, is right *for them*, which is agreeable to their fixed opinions and desires. But when we observe what is urged as the public opinion, to be, in truth, the opinion only, or perhaps the feigned profession, of a few crafty leaders; that the numbers who join in the cry, serve only to swell and multiply the sound, without any accession of judgment, or exercise of understanding; and that oftentimes the wisest counsels have been thus overborne by tumult and uproar;—we may conceive occasions to arise, in which the commonwealth may be saved by the reluctance of the nobility to adopt the caprices, or to yield to the vehemence, of the common people. In expecting this advantage from an order of nobles, we do not suppose the nobility to be more unprejudiced than others; we only suppose that their prejudices will be different from, and may occasionally counteract, those of others.

If the personal privileges of the peerage, which are usually so many injuries to the rest of the community, be restrained, I see little inconveniency in the increase of its number; for it is only dividing the same quantity of power amongst more hands, which is rather favourable to public freedom than otherwise.

The admission of a small number of ecclesiastics into the House of Lords, is but an equitable compensation to the clergy for the exclusion of their order from the House of Commons. They are a set of men considerable by their number and property, as well as by their influence, and the duties of their station; yet, whilst every other profession has those amongst the national representatives, who, being conversant in the same occupation, are able to state, and naturally disposed to support, the rights and interests of the class and calling to which they belong, the clergy alone are deprived of this advantage: which hardship is made up to them by introducing the prelacy into parliament; and if bishops, from gratitude or expectation, be more obsequious to the will of the crown than those who possess great temporal inheritances, they are properly inserted into that part of the constitution, from which much or frequent resistance to the measures of government is not expected.

I acknowledge, that I perceive no sufficient reason for exempting the persons of members of either house of parliament from arrest for debt. The counsels or suffrage of a single senator, especially of one who in the management of his own affairs may justly be suspected of a want of prudence or honesty, can seldom be so necessary

to those of the public, as to justify a departure from that wholesome policy, by which the laws of a commercial state punish and stigmatize insolvency. But, whatever reason may be pleaded for their *personal* immunity, when this privilege of parliament is extended to domestics and retainers, or when it is permitted to impede or delay the course of judicial proceedings, it becomes an absurd sacrifice of equal justice to imaginary dignity.

There is nothing in the British constitution so remarkable, as the irregularity of the popular representation. The House of Commons consists of five hundred and fifty-eight members, of whom two hundred are elected by seven thousand constituents; so that a majority of these seven thousand, without any reasonable title to superior weight or influence in the state, may, under certain circumstances, decide a question against the opinion of as many millions. Or, to place the same object in another point of view: If my estate be situated in one county of the kingdom, I possess the ten-thousandth part of a single representative; if in another, the thousandth; if in a particular district, I may be one in twenty who choose two representatives; if in a still more favoured spot, I may enjoy the right of appointing two myself. If I have been born, or dwell, or have served an apprenticeship, in one town, I am represented in the national assembly by two deputies, in the choice of whom I exercise an actual and sensible share of power; if accident has thrown my birth, or habitation, or service, into another town, I have no representative at all, nor more power or concern in the election of those who make the laws by which I am governed, than if I was a subject of the Grand Signior: and this partiality subsists without any pretence whatever of merit or of propriety, to justify the preference of one place to another. Or, thirdly, to describe the state of national representation as it exists in reality, it may be affirmed, I believe, with truth, that about one half of the House of Commons obtain their seats in that assembly by the election of the people, the other half by purchase, or by the nomination of single proprietors of great estates.

This is a flagrant incongruity in the constitution; but it is one of those objections which strike most forcibly at first sight. The effect of all reasoning upon the subject is, to diminish the first impression; on which account it deserves the more attentive examination, that we may be assured, before we adventure upon a reformation, that the magnitude of the evil justifies the danger of the experiment. In a few remarks that follow, we would be understood, in the first place, to decline all conference with those who wish to alter the form of government of these kingdoms. The reformers with whom we have to do, are they who, whilst they change this part of the system, would retain the rest. If any Englishman expect more happiness to his country under a republic, he may very consistently recommend a new-modelling of elections to parliament; because, if the King and House of Lords were laid aside, the present disproportionate representation would produce nothing but a confused and ill-digested oligarchy. In like manner we have a controversy with those writers who insist upon representation as a *natural* right :* we consider it so far only as a right at all, as it conduces to public utility; that is, as it contributes to the establishment of good laws, or as it secures to the people the just administration of these laws. These effects depend upon the disposition and abilities of the national counsellors. Wherefore, if men the most likely by their qualifications to know and to promote the public interest, be actually returned to parliament, it signifies little who return them. If the properest persons be elected, what matters it by whom they are elected? At least, no prudent statesman would subvert long-established or even settled rules of representation, without a prospect of procuring wiser or better representatives. This then being well observed, let us, before we seek to obtain any thing more, consider duly what we already have. We *have* a House of Commons composed of five hundred and fifty-eight members, in which number are found the most considerable landholders and merchants of the kingdom; the heads of the army, the navy, and the law; the occupiers of great offices in the state; together with many private individuals, eminent by their knowledge, eloquence, or activity. Now if the country be not safe in such hands, in whose may it confide its interests? If such a number of such men be liable to the influence of corrupt motives, what assembly of men will be secure from the same danger? Does any new scheme of representation promise to collect together more wisdom, or to produce firmer integrity? In this view of the subject, and attending not to ideas of order and proportion (of which many minds are much enamoured,) but to effects alone, we may discover just excuses for those parts of the present representation which appear to a hasty observer most exceptionable and absurd. It should be remembered, as a maxim extremely applicable to this subject, that no order or assembly of men whatever can long maintain their place and authority in a mixed government, of which the members do not individually possess a respectable share of personal importance. Now whatever may be the defects of the present arrangement, it infallibly secures a great weight of property to the House of Commons, by rendering many seats in that house accessible to men of large fortunes, and to such men alone. By which means those characters are engaged in the defence of the separate rights and interests of this branch of the legislature, that are best able to support its claims. The constitution of most of the small boroughs, especially the burgage tenure, contributes, though undesignedly, to the same effect: for the appointment of the representatives we find commonly annexed to certain great inheritances. Elections purely popular are in this respect uncertain: in times of tranquillity, the natural ascendancy of wealth will prevail; but when the minds of men are inflamed by political dissensions, this influence often yields to more impetuous motives.—The variety of tenures and qualifications, upon which the right of voting is founded, appears to me a recommendation of the mode which now subsists, as it tends to introduce into parliament a

* If this right be *natural*, no doubt it must be equal; and the right, we may add, of one sex, as well as of the other. Whereas every plan of representation that we have heard of, begins by excluding the votes of women; thus cutting off, at a single stroke, one half of the public from a right which is asserted to be inherent in all; a right too, as some represent it, not only universal, but unalienable, and indefeasible, and imprescriptible.

corresponding mixture of characters and professions. It has been long observed that conspicuous abilities are most frequently found with the representatives of small boroughs. And this is nothing more than what the laws of human conduct might teach us to expect: when such boroughs are set to sale, those men are likely to become purchasers, who are enabled by their talents to make the best of their bargain: when a seat is not sold, but given by the opulent proprietor of a burgage tenure, the patron finds his own interest consulted, by the reputation and abilities of the member whom he nominates. If certain of the nobility hold the appointment of some part of the House of Commons, it serves to maintain that alliance between the two branches of the legislature which no good citizen would wish to see dissevered: it helps to keep the government of the country in the House of Commons, in which it would not perhaps long continue to reside, if so powerful and wealthy a part of the nation as the peerage compose, were excluded from all share and interest in its constitution. If there be a few boroughs so circumstanced as to lie at the disposal of the crown, whilst the number of such is known and small, they may be tolerated with little danger. For where would be the impropriety or the inconveniency, if the king at once should nominate a limited number of his servants to seats in parliament; or, what is the same thing, if seats in parliament were annexed to the possession of certain of the most efficient and responsible offices in the state? The present representation, after all these deductions, and under the confusion in which it confessedly lies, is still in such a degree popular, or rather the representatives are so connected with the mass of the community by a society of interests and passions, that the will of the people, when it is determined, permanent and general, almost always at length prevails.

Upon the whole, in the several plans which have been suggested, of an equal or a reformed representation, it will be difficult to discover any proposal that has a tendency to throw more of the business of the nation into the House of Commons, or to collect a set of men more fit to transact that business, or in general more interested in the national happiness and prosperity. One consequence, however, may be expected from these projects, namely, "less flexibility to the influence of the crown." And since the diminution of this influence is the declared and perhaps the sole design of the various schemes that have been produced, whether for regulating the elections, contracting the duration, or for purifying the constitution of parliament by the exclusion of placemen and pensioners; it is obvious to remark, that the more apt and natural, as well as the more safe and quiet way of attaining the same end, would be by a direct reduction of the patronage of the crown, which might be effected to a certain extent without hazarding further consequences. Superfluous and exorbitant emoluments of office may not only be suppressed for the present; but provisions of law be devised, which should for the future restrain within certain limits the number and value of the offices in the donation of the king.

But whilst we dispute concerning different schemes of reformation, all directed to the same end, a previous doubt occurs in the debate, whether the end itself be good or safe: whether the influence so loudly complained of, can be destroyed, or even much diminished, without danger to the state. Whilst the zeal of some men beholds this influence with a jealousy which nothing but its entire abolition can appease, many wise and virtuous politicians deem a considerable portion of it to be as necessary a part of the British constitution, as any other ingredient in the composition; to be that, indeed, which gives cohesion and solidity to the whole. Were the measures of government, say they, opposed from nothing but principle, government ought to have nothing but the rectitude of its measures to support them: but since opposition springs from other motives, government must possess an influence to counteract these motives; to produce, not a bias of the passions, but a neutrality;—it must have some weight to cast into the scale, to set the balance even. It is the nature of power, always to press upon the boundaries which confine it. Licentiousness, faction, envy, impatience of control or inferiority; the secret pleasure of mortifying the great, or the hope of dispossessing them, a constant willingness to question and thwart whatever is dictated or even proposed by another; a disposition common to all bodies of men, to extend the claims and authority of their orders; above all, that love of power, and of showing it, which resides more or less in every human breast, and which, in popular assemblies, is inflamed, like every other passion, by communication and encouragement: these motives, added to private designs and resentments, cherished also by popular acclamation, and operating upon the great share of power already possessed by the House of Commons, might induce a majority, or, at least a large party of men in that assembly, to unite in endeavouring to draw to themselves the whole government of the state: or, at least, so to obstruct the conduct of public affairs, by a wanton and perverse opposition, as to render it impossible for the wisest statesman to carry forwards the business of the nation with success or satisfaction.

Some passages of our national history afford grounds for these apprehensions.—Before the accession of James the First, or, at least, during the reigns of his three immediate predecessors, the government of England was a government by force; that is, the king carried his measures in parliament by *intimidation*. A sense of personal danger kept the members of the House of Commons in subjection. A conjunction of fortunate causes delivered, at last, the parliament and nation from slavery. That overbearing system which had declined in the hands of James, expired early in the reign of his son. After the Restoration, there succeeded in its place, and, since the Revolution, has been methodically pursued, the more successful expedient of *influence*. Now we remember what passed between the loss of terror, and the establishment of influence. The transactions of that interval, whatever we may think of their occasion or effect, no friend of regal government would wish to see revived.—But the affairs of this kingdom afford a more recent attestation to the same doctrine. In the British colonies of North America, the late assemblies possessed much of the power and constitution of our House of Commons. The king and government of Great Britain held no patronage in the country, which could create attachment and influence sufficient to counteract that restless arrogating spirit, which, in popular assemblies, when left to itself,

will never brook an authority that checks and interferes with its own. To this cause, excited perhaps by some unseasonable provocations, we may attribute, as to their true and proper original, (we will not say the misfortunes, but) the changes that have taken place in the British empire. The admonition which such examples suggest, will have its weight with those who are content with the general frame of the English constitution; and who consider stability amongst the first perfections of any government.

We protest, however, against any construction by which what is here said shall be attempted to be applied to the justification of bribery, or of any clandestine reward or solicitation whatever. The very secrecy of such negotiations confesses or begets a consciousness of guilt; which when the mind is once taught to endure without uneasiness, the character is prepared for every compliance: and there is the greater danger in these corrupt practices, as the extent of their operation is unlimited and unknown. Our apology relates solely to that influence, which results from the acceptance or expectation of public preferments. Nor does the influence, which we defend, require any sacrifice of personal probity. In political, above all other subjects, the arguments or rather the conjectures on each side of the question, are often so equally poised, that the wisest judgments may be held in suspense: these I call subjects of *indifference*. But again; when the subject is not *indifferent* in itself, it will appear such to a great part of those to whom it is proposed, for want of information, or reflection, or experience, or of capacity to collect and weigh the reasons by which either side is supported. These are subjects of *apparent indifference*. This indifference occurs still more frequently in personal contests; in which we do not often discover any reason of public utility for the preference of one competitor to another. These cases compose the province of influence: that is, the decision in these cases will inevitably be determined by influence of some sort or other. The only doubt is, what influence shall be admitted. If you remove the influence of the crown, it is only to make way for influence from a different quarter. If motives of expectation and gratitude be withdrawn, other motives will succeed in their place, acting probably in an opposite direction, but equally irrelative and external to the proper merits of the question. There exist, as we have seen, passions in the human heart, which will always make a strong party against the executive power of a mixed government. According as the disposition of parliament is friendly or adverse to the recommendation of the crown in matters which are really or apparently indifferent, as indifference hath been now explained, the business of the empire will be transacted with ease and convenience, or embarrassed with endless contention and difficulty. Nor is it a conclusion founded in justice, or warranted by experience, that because men are induced by views of interest to yield their consent to measures concerning which their judgment decides nothing, they may be brought by the same influence to act in deliberate opposition to knowledge and duty. Whoever reviews the operations of government in this country since the Revolution, will find few even of the most questionable measures of administration, about which the best-instructed judgment might not have doubted at the time; but of which we may affirm with certainty, they were *indifferent* to the greatest part of those who concurred in them. From the success, or the facility, with which they who dealt out the patronage of the crown carried measures like these, ought we to conclude, that a similar application of honours and emoluments would procure the consent of parliaments to counsels evidently detrimental to the common welfare? Is there not, on the contrary, more reason to fear, that the prerogative, if deprived of influence, would not be long able to support itself? For when we reflect upon the power of the House of Commons to extort a compliance with its resolution from the other parts of the legislature; or to put to death the constitution by a refusal of the annual grants of money to the support of the necessary functions of government;—when we reflect also what motives there are, which, in the vicissitudes of political interests and passions, may one day arm and point this power against the executive magistrate; when we attend to these considerations, we shall be led perhaps to acknowledge, that there is not more of paradox than of truth in that important, but much decried apothegm, "that an independent parliament is incompatible with the existence of the monarchy."

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Administration of Justice.

The first maxim of a free state is, that the laws be made by one set of men, and administered by another; in other words, that the legislative and judicial characters be kept separate. When these offices are united in the same person or assembly, particular laws are made for particular cases, springing oftentimes from partial motives, and directed to private ends: whilst they are kept separate, general laws are made by one body of men, without foreseeing whom they may affect; and, when made, must be applied by the other, let them affect whom they will.

For the sake of illustration, let it be supposed, in this country, either that, parliaments being laid aside, the courts of Westminster-Hall made their own laws; or that the two houses of parliament, with the King at their head, tried and decided causes at their bar: it is evident, in the first place, that the decisions of such a judicature would be so many laws; and in the second place, that, when the parties and the interests to be affected by the law were known, the inclinations of the law-makers would inevitably attach to one side or the other; and that where there were neither any fixed rules to regulate their determinations, nor any superior power to control their proceedings, these inclinations would interfere with the integrity of public justice. The consequence of which must be, that the subjects of such a constitution would live either without any constant laws, that is, without any known pre-established rules of adjudication whatever; or under laws made for particular persons, and partaking of the contradictions and iniquity of the motives to which they owed their origin.

Which dangers, by the division of the legislative and judicial functions, are in this country effectually provided against. Parliament knows not the individuals upon whom its acts will operate; it has no cases or parties before it; no private de-

signs to serve; consequently, its resolutions will be suggested by the consideration of universal effects and tendencies, which always produces impartial, and commonly advantageous regulations. When laws are made, courts of justice, whatever be the disposition of the judges, must abide by them: for the legislative being necessarily the supreme power of the state, the judicial and every other power is accountable to that; and it cannot be doubted that the persons who possess the sovereign authority of government, will be tenacious of the laws which they themselves prescribe, and sufficiently jealous of the assumption of dispensing and legislative power by any others.

This fundamental rule of civil jurisprudence is violated in the case of acts of attainder or confiscation, in bills of pains and penalties, and in all *ex post facto* laws whatever, in which parliament exercises the double office of legislature and judge. And whoever either understands the value of the rule itself, or collects the history of those instances in which it has been invaded, will be induced, I believe, to acknowledge, that it had been wiser and safer never to have departed from it. He will confess, at least, that nothing but the most manifest and immediate peril of the commonwealth will justify a repetition of these dangerous examples. If the laws in being do not punish an offender, let him go unpunished; let the legislature, admonished of the defect of the laws, provide against the commission of future crimes of the same sort. The escape of one delinquent can never produce so much harm to the community as may arise from the infraction of a rule upon which the purity of public justice, and the existence of civil liberty, essentially depend.

The next security for the impartial administration of justice, especially in decisions to which government is a party, is the independency of the judges. As protection against every illegal attack upon the rights of the subject by the servants of the crown is to be sought for from these tribunals, the judges of the land become not unfrequently the arbitrators between the king and the people, on which account they ought to be independent of either; or, what is the same thing, equally dependent upon both; that is, if they be appointed by the one, they should be removeable only by the other. This was the policy which dictated that memorable improvement in our constitution, by which the judges, who before the Revolution held their offices during the pleasure of the king, can now be deprived of them only by an address from both houses of parliament; as the most regular, solemn, and authentic way, by which the dissatisfaction of the people can be expressed. To make this independency of the judges complete, the public salaries of their office ought not only to be certain both in amount and continuance, but so liberal as to secure their integrity from the temptation of secret bribes; which liberality will answer also the further purpose of preserving their jurisdiction from contempt, and their characters from suspicion; as well as of rendering the office worthy of the ambition of men of eminence in their profession.

A third precaution to be observed in the formation of courts of justice is, that the number of the judges be small. For, beside that the violence and tumult inseparable from large assemblies are inconsistent with the patience, method, and attention requisite in judicial investigations; beside that all passions and prejudices act with augmented force upon a collected multitude; beside these objections, judges, when they are numerous, *divide* the shame of an unjust determination; they shelter themselves under one another's example; each man thinks his own character hid in the crowd: for which reason, the judges ought always to be so few, as that the conduct of each may be conspicuous to public observation; that each may be responsible in his separate and particular reputation for the decisions in which he concurs. The truth of the above remark has been exemplified in this country, in the effects of that wise regulation which transferred the trial of parliamentary elections from the House of Commons at large to a select committee of that House, composed of thirteen members. This alteration, simply by reducing the number of the judges, and, in consequence of that reduction, exposing the judicial conduct of each to public animadversion, has given to a judicature, which had been long swayed by interest and solicitation, the solemnity and virtue of the most upright tribunals.—I should prefer an even to an odd number of judges, and four to almost any other number: for in this number, beside that it sufficiently consults the idea of separate responsibility, nothing can be decided but by a majority of three to one: and when we consider that every decision establishes a perpetual precedent, we shall allow that it ought to proceed from an authority, not less than this. If the court be equally divided, nothing is done; things remain as they were; with some inconveniency, indeed, to the parties, but without the danger to the public of a hasty precedent.

A fourth requisite in the constitution of a court of justice, and equivalent to many checks upon the discretion of judges, is, that its proceedings be carried on in public, *apertis foribus;* not only before a promiscuous concourse of by-standers, but in the audience of the whole profession of the law. The opinion of the bar concerning what passes, will be impartial; and will commonly guide that of the public. The most corrupt judge will fear to indulge his dishonest wishes in the presence of such an assembly: he must encounter, what few can support, the censure of his equals and companions, together with the indignation and reproaches of his country.

Something is also gained to the public by appointing two or three courts of concurrent jurisdiction, that it may remain in the option of the suitor to which he will resort. By this means a tribunal which may happen to be occupied by ignorant or suspected judges, will be deserted for others that possess more of the confidence of the nation.

But, lastly, if several courts co-ordinate to and independent of each other, subsist together in the country, it seems necessary that the appeals from all of them should meet and terminate in the same judicature; in order that one supreme tribunal, by whose final sentence all others are bound and concluded, may superintend and preside over the rest. This constitution is necessary for two purposes:—to preserve an uniformity in the decisions of inferior courts, and to maintain to each the proper limits of its jurisdiction. Without a common superior, different courts might establish contradictory rules of adjudication, and the contradiction be final and without remedy; the same question might receive opposite determinations, according as it was brought before one court or another, and

the determination in each be ultimate and irreversible. A common appellant jurisdiction, prevents or puts an end to this confusion. For when the judgments upon appeals are consistent (which may be expected, whilst it is the same court which is at last resorted to,) the different courts, from which the appeals are brought, will be reduced to a like consistency with one another.—Moreover, if questions arise between courts independent of each other, concerning the extent and boundaries of their respective jurisdiction, as each will be desirous of enlarging its own, an authority which both acknowledge can alone adjust the controversy. Such a power, therefore, must reside somewhere, lest the rights and repose of the country be distracted by the endless opposition and mutual encroachments of its courts of justice.

There are two kinds of judicature; the one where the office of the judge is permanent in the same person, and consequently where the judge is appointed and known long before the trial; the other, where the judge is determined by lot at the time of the trial, and for that turn only. The one may be called a *fixed*, the other a *casual* judicature. From the former may be expected those qualifications which are preferred and sought for in the choice of judges, and that knowledge and readiness which result from experience in the office. But then, as the judge is known beforehand, he is accessible to the parties; there exists a possibility of secret management and undue practices; or, in contests between the crown and the subject, the judge appointed by the crown may be suspected of partiality to his patron, or of entertaining inclinations favourable to the authority from which he derives his own. The advantage attending the second kind of judicature, is indifferency; the defect, the want of that legal science which produces uniformity and justice in legal decisions. The construction of English courts of law, in which causes are tried by a jury, with the assistance of a judge, combines the two species with peculiar success. This admirable contrivance unites the wisdom of a fixed with the integrity of a casual judicature; and avoids, in a great measure, the inconveniences of both. The judge imparts to the jury the benefit of his erudition and experience; the jury, by their disinterestedness, check any corrupt partialities which previous application may have produced in the judge. If the determination were left to the judge, the party might suffer under the superior interest of his adversary: if it were left to an uninstructed jury, his rights would be in still greater danger, from the ignorance of those who were to decide upon them. The present wise admixture of chance and choice in the constitution of the court in which his cause is tried, guards him equally against the fear of injury from either of these causes.

In proportion to the acknowledged excellency of this mode of trial, every deviation from it ought to be watched with vigilance, and admitted by the legislature with caution and reluctance. Summary convictions before justices of the peace, especially for offences against the game laws; courts of conscience; extending the jurisdiction of courts of equity; urging too far the distinction between questions of law and matters of fact;—are all so many infringements upon this great charter of public safety.

Nevertheless, the trial by jury is sometimes found inadequate to the administration of equal justice. This imperfection takes place chiefly in disputes in which some popular passion or prejudice intervenes; as where a particular order of men advance claims upon the rest of the community, which is the case of the clergy contending for tithes; or where an order of men are obnoxious by their professions, as are officers of the revenue, bailiffs, baliffs' followers, and other low ministers of the law; or where one of the parties has an interest in common with the general interest of the jurors, and that of the other is opposed to it, as in contests between landlords and tenants, between lords of manors and the holders of estates under them; or, lastly, where the minds of men are inflamed by political dissensions or religious hatred. These prejudices act most powerfully upon the common people; of which order juries are made up. The force and danger of them are also increased by the very circumstance of taking juries out of the county in which the subject of dispute arises. In the neighbourhood of the parties, the cause is often prejudged: and these secret decisions of the mind proceed commonly more upon sentiments of favour or hatred,—upon some opinion concerning the sect, family, profession, character, connexions, or circumstances of the parties,—than upon any knowledge or discussion of the proper merits of the question. More exact justice would, in many instances, be rendered to the suitors, if the determination were left entirely to the judges; provided we could depend upon the same purity of conduct, when the power of these magistrates was enlarged, which they have long manifested in the exercise of a mixed and restrained authority. But this is an experiment too big with public danger to be hazarded. The effects, however, of some local prejudices, might be safely obviated by a law empowering the court in which the action is brought, to send the cause to trial in a distant county; the expenses attending the change of place always falling upon the party who applied for it.

There is a second division of courts of justice, which presents a new alternative of difficulties. Either one, two, or a few sovereign courts may be erected in the metropolis, for the whole kingdom to resort to; or courts of local jurisdiction may be fixed in various provinces and districts of the empire. Great, though opposite, inconveniences attend each arrangement. If the court be remote and solemn, it becomes, by these very qualities, expensive and dilatory: the expense is unavoidably increased when witnesses, parties, and agents, must be brought to attend from distant parts of the country: and, where the whole judicial business of a large nation is collected into a few superior tribunals, it will be found impossible, even if the prolixity of forms which retards the progress of causes were removed, to give a prompt hearing to every complaint, or an immediate answer to any. On the other hand, if, to remedy these evils, and to render the administration of justice cheap and speedy, domestic and summary tribunals be erected in each neighbourhood, the advantage of such courts will be accompanied with all the dangers of ignorance and partiality, and with the certain mischief of confusion and contrariety in their decisions. The law of England, by its circuit, or itinerary courts, contains a provision for the distribution of private justice, in a great measure relieved from both these objections. As

the presiding magistrate comes into the country a stranger to its prejudices, rivalships, and connexions, he brings with him none of those attachments and regards which are so apt to pervert the course of justice when the parties and the judges inhabit the same neighbourhood. Again; as this magistrate is usually one of the judges of the supreme tribunals of the kingdom, and has passed his life in the study and administration of the laws, he possesses, it may be presumed, those professional qualifications which befit the dignity and importance of his station. Lastly, as both he, and the advocates who accompany him in his circuit, are employed in the business of those superior courts (to which also their proceedings are amenable,) they will naturally conduct themselves by the rules of adjudication which they have applied or learned there; and by this means maintain, what constitutes a principal perfection of civil government, one law of the land in every part and district of the empire.

Next to the constitution of courts of justice, we are naturally led to consider the maxims which ought to guide their proceedings; and, upon this subject, the chief inquiry will be, how far, and for what reasons, it is expedient to adhere to former determinations; or whether it be necessary for judges to attend to any other consideration than the apparent and particular equity of the case before them. Now, although to assert that precedents established by one set of judges ought to be incontrovertible by their successors in the same jurisdiction, or by those who exercise a higher, would be to attribute to the sentence of those judges all the authority we ascribe to the most solemn acts of the legislature: yet the general security of private rights, and of civil life, requires that such precedents, especially if they have been confirmed by repeated adjudications, should not be overthrown, without a detection of manifest error, or without some imputation of dishonesty upon the court by whose judgment the question was first decided. And this deference to prior decisions is founded upon two reasons: first, that the discretion of judges may be bound down by positive rules; and secondly, that the subject, upon every occasion in which his legal interest is concerned, may know beforehand how to act, and what to expect. To set judges free from any obligation to conform themselves to the decisions of their predecessors, would be to lay open a latitude of judging with which no description of men can safely be intrusted; it would be to allow space for the exercise of those concealed partialities, which, since they cannot by any human policy be excluded, ought to be confined by boundaries and landmarks. It is in vain to allege, that the superintendency of parliament is always at hand to control and punish abuses of judicial discretion. By what rules can parliament proceed? How shall they pronounce a decision to be wrong, where there exists no acknowledged measure or standard of what is right; which, in a multitude of instances, would be the case, if prior determinations were no longer to be appealed to?

Diminishing the danger of partiality, is one thing gained by adhering to precedents; but not the principal thing. The subject of every system of laws must expect that decision in his own case, which he knows that others have received in cases similar to his. If he expect not this, he can expect nothing. There exists no other rule or principle of reasoning, by which he can foretell, or even conjecture, the event of a judicial contest. To remove therefore the grounds of this expectation, by rejecting the force and authority of precedents, is to entail upon the subject the worst property of slavery,—to have no assurance of his rights, or knowledge of his duty. The quiet also of the country, as well as the confidence and satisfaction of each man's mind, requires uniformity in judicial proceedings. Nothing quells a spirit of litigation, like despair of success: therefore nothing so completely puts an end to law-suits, as a rigid adherence to known rules of adjudication. Whilst the event is uncertain, which it ever must be whilst it is uncertain whether former determinations upon the same subject will be followed or not, law-suits will be endless and innumerable: men will commonly engage in them, either from the hope of prevailing in their claims, which the smallest chance is sufficient to encourage; or with the design of intimidating their adversary by the terror of a dubious litigation. When justice is rendered to the parties, only half the business of a court of justice is done: the more important part of its office remains;—to put an end, for the future, to every fear, and quarrel, and expense, upon the same point; and so to regulate its proceedings, that not only a doubt once decided may be stirred no more, but that the whole train of law-suits, which issue from one uncertainty, may die with the parent-question. Now this advantage can be attained only by considering each decision as a direction to succeeding judges. And it should be observed, that every departure from former determinations, especially if they have been often repeated or long submitted to, shakes the stability of all legal title. It is not fixing a point anew, it is leaving every thing unfixed. For by the same stretch of power by which the present race of judges take upon them to contradict the judgment of their predecessors, those who try the question next may set aside theirs.

From an adherence however to precedents, by which so much is gained to the public, two consequences arise which are often lamented; the hardship of particular determinations, and the intricacy of the law as a science. To the first of these complaints, we must apply this reflection:—"That uniformity is of more importance than equity, in proportion as a general uncertainty would be a greater evil than particular injustice." The second is attended with no greater inconveniency than that of erecting the practice of the law into a separate profession; which this reason, we allow, makes necessary: for if we attribute so much authority to precedents, it is expedient that they be known, in every cause, both to the advocates and to the judge: this knowledge cannot be general, since it is the fruit oftentimes of laborious research, or demands a memory stored with long-collected erudition.

To a mind revolving upon the subject of human jurisprudence, there frequently occurs this question:—Why, since the maxims of natural justice are few and evident, do there arise so many doubts and controversies in their application? Or, in other words, how comes it to pass, that although the principles of the law of nature be simple, and for the most part sufficiently obvious, there should

exist, nevertheless, in every system of municipal laws, and in the actual administration of relative justice, numerous uncertainties and acknowledged difficulty? Whence, it may be asked, so much room for litigation, and so many subsisting disputes, if the rules of human duty be neither obscure nor dubious? If a system of morality containing both the precepts of revelation and the deductions of reason, may be comprised within the compass of one moderate volume; and the moralist be able, as he pretends, to describe the rights and obligations of mankind, in all the different relations they may hold to one another; what need of those codes of positive and particular institutions, of those tomes of statutes and reports, which require the employment of a long life even to peruse? And this question is immediately connected with the argument which has been discussed in the preceding paragraph: for, unless there be found some greater uncertainty in the law of nature, or what may be called natural equity, when it comes to be applied to real cases and to actual adjudication, than what appears in the rules and principles of the science, as delivered in the writings of those who treat of the subject, it were better that the determination of every cause should be left to the conscience of the judge, unfettered by precedents and authorities; since the very purpose for which these are introduced, is to give a certainty to judicial proceedings, which such proceedings would want without them.

Now to account for the existence of so many sources of litigation, notwithstanding the clearness and perfection of natural justice, it should be observed, in the first place, that treatises of morality always suppose facts to be ascertained; and not only so, but the intention likewise of the parties to be known and laid bare. For example: when we pronounce that promises ought to be fulfilled in that sense in which the promiser apprehended, at the time of making the promise, the other party received and understood it: the apprehension of one side, and the expectation of the other, must be discovered, before this rule can be reduced to practice, or applied to the determination of any actual dispute. Wherefore the discussion of facts which the moralist supposes to be settled, the discovery of intentions which he presumes to be known, still remain to exercise the inquiry of courts of justice. And as these facts and intentions are often to be inferred, or rather conjectured, from obscure indications, from suspicious testimony, or from a comparison of opposite and contending probabilities, they afford a never-failing supply of doubt and litigation. For which reason, as hath been observed in a former part of this work, the science of morality is to be considered rather as a direction to the parties, who are conscious of their own thoughts and motives, and designs, to which consciousness the teacher of morality constantly appeals; than as a guide to the judge, or to any third person, whose arbitration must proceed upon rules of evidence, and maxims of credibility, with which the moralist has no concern.

Secondly; there exists a multitude of cases, in which the law of nature, that is, the law of public expediency, prescribes nothing, except that some certain rule be adhered to, and that the rule actually established, be preserved; it either being indifferent what rule obtains, or, out of many rules, no one being so much more advantageous than the rest, as to recompense the inconveniency of an alteration. In all such cases, the law of nature sends us to the law of the land. She directs that either some fixed rule be introduced by an act of the legislature, or that the rule which accident, or custom, or common consent, hath already established, be steadily maintained. Thus, in the descent of lands, or the inheritance of personals from intestate proprietors, whether the kindred of the grandmother, or of the great-grandmother, shall be preferred in the succession; whether the degrees of consanguinity shall be computed through the common ancestor, or from him; whether the widow shall take a third or a moiety of her husband's fortune; whether sons shall be preferred to daughters, or the elder to the younger; whether the distinction of age shall be regarded amongst sisters, as well as between brothers; in these, and in a great variety of questions which the same subject supplies, the law of nature determines nothing. The only answer she returns to our inquiries is, that some certain and general rule be laid down by public authority; be obeyed when laid down; and that the quiet of the country be not disturbed, nor the expectation of heirs frustrated, by capricious innovations. This silence or neutrality of the law of nature, which we have exemplified in the case of intestacy, holds concerning a great part of the questions that relate to the right or acquisition of property. Recourse then must necessarily be had to statutes, or precedents, or usage, to fix what the law of nature has left loose. The interpretation of these statutes, the search after precedents, the investigation of customs, compose therefore an unavoidable, and at the same time a large and intricate, portion of forensic business. Positive constitutions or judicial authorities are, in like manner, wanted to give precision to many things which are in their nature *indeterminate*. The age of legal discretion; at what time of life a person shall be deemed competent to the performance of any act which may bind his property; whether at twenty, or twenty-one, or earlier or later, or at some point of time between these years; can only be ascertained by a positive rule of the society to which the party belongs. The line has not been drawn by nature; the human understanding advancing to maturity by insensible degrees, and its progress varying in different individuals. Yet it is necessary, for the sake of mutual security, that a precise age be fixed, and that what is fixed be known to all. It is on these occasions that the intervention of law supplies the inconstancy of nature. Again, there are other things which are perfectly *arbitrary*, and capable of no certainty but what is given to them by positive regulation. It is fit that a limited time should be assigned to defendants, to plead to the complaints alleged against them; and also that the default of pleading within a certain time should be taken for a confession of the charge: but to how many days or months that term should be extended, though necessary to be known with certainty, cannot be known at all by any information which the law of nature affords. And the same remark seems applicable to almost all those rules of proceeding, which constitute what is called the practice of the court: as they cannot be traced out by reasoning, they must be settled by authority.

Thirdly; in contracts, whether express or implied, which involve a great number of conditions;

as in those which are entered into between masters and servants, principals and agents; many also of merchandise, or for works of art; in some likewise which relate to the negotiation of money or bills, or to the acceptance of credit or security: the original design and expectation of the parties was, that both sides should be guided by the course and custom of the country in transactions of the same sort. Consequently, when these contracts come to be disputed, natural justice can only refer to that custom. But as such customs are not always sufficiently uniform or notorious, but often to be collected from the production and comparison of instances and accounts repugnant to one another; and each custom being only that, after all, which amongst a variety of usages seems to predominate; we have *here* also ample room for doubt and contest.

Fourthly; as the law of nature, founded in the very construction of human society, which is formed to endure through a series of perishing generations, requires that the just engagements a man enters into should continue in force beyond his own life; it follows, that the private rights of persons frequently depend upon what has been transacted, in times remote from the present, by their ancestors or predecessors, by those under whom they claim, or to whose obligations they have succeeded. Thus the questions which usually arise between lords of manors and their tenants, between the king and those who claim royal franchises, or between them and the persons affected by these franchises, depend upon the terms of the original grant. In like manner, every dispute concerning tithes, in which an exemption or composition is pleaded, depends upon the agreement which took place between the predecessor of the claimant and the ancient owner of the land. The appeal to these grants and agreements is dictated by natural equity, as well as by the municipal law; but concerning the existence, or the conditions, of such old covenants, doubts will perpetually occur, to which the law of nature affords no solution. The loss or decay of records, the perishableness of living memory, the corruption and carelessness of tradition, all conspire to multiply uncertainties upon this head; what cannot be produced or proved, must be left to loose and fallible presumption. Under the same head may be included another topic of altercation;—the tracing out of boundaries, which time, or neglect, or unity of possession, or mixture of occupation, has confounded or obliterated. To which should be added, a difficulty which often presents itself in disputes concerning rights of *way*, both public and private, and of those easements which one man claims in another man's property, namely, that of distinguishing, after a lapse of years, the use of an indulgence from the exercise of a right.

Fifthly; the quantity or extent of an injury, even when the cause and author of it are known, is often dubious and undefined. If the injury, consists in the loss of some specific right, the value of the right measures the amount of the injury: but what a man may have suffered in his person, from an assault; in his reputation, by slander; or in the comfort of his life, by the seduction of a wife or daughter; or what sum of money shall be deemed a reparation for damages such as these; cannot be ascertained by any rules which the law of nature supplies. The law of nature commands, that reparation be made; and adds to her command, that, when the aggressor and the sufferer disagree, the damage be assessed by authorised and indifferent arbitrators. Here then recourse must be had to courts of law, not only with the permission, but in some measure by the direction, of natural justice.

Sixthly; when controversies arise in the interpretation of written laws, they for the most part arise upon some contingency which the composer of the law did not foresee or think of. In the adjudication of such cases, this dilemma presents itself; if the laws be permitted to operate only upon the cases which actually were contemplated by the law-makers, they will always be found defective: if they be extended to every case to which the reasoning, and spirit, and expediency, of the provision seem to belong, without any farther evidence of the intention of the legislature, we shall allow to the judges a liberty of applying the law, which will fall very little short of the power of making it. If a literal construction be adhered to, the law will often fail of its end; if a loose and vague exposition be admitted, the law might as well have never been enacted; for this license will bring back into the subject all the discretion and uncertainty which it was the design of the legislature to take away. Courts of justice are, and always must be, embarrassed by these opposite difficulties; and, as it never can be known beforehand, in what degree either consideration may prevail in the mind of the judge, there remains an unavoidable cause of doubt, and a place for contention.

Seventhly; the deliberations of courts of justice upon every *new* question, are encumbered with additional difficulties, in consequence of the authority which the judgment of the court possesses, as a precedent to future judicatures; which authority appertains not only to the conclusions the court delivers, but to the principles and arguments upon which they are built. The view of this effect makes it necessary for a judge to look beyond the case before him; and, beside the attention he owes to the truth and justice of the cause between the parties, to reflect whether the principles, and maxims, and reasoning, which he adopts and authorises, can be applied with safety to all cases which admit of a comparison with the present. The decision of the cause, were the effects of the decision to stop there, might be easy: but the consequence of establishing the principle which such a decision assumes, may be difficult, though of the utmost importance, to be foreseen and regulated.

Finally; after all the certainty and rest that can be given to points of law, either by the interposition of the legislature or the authority of precedents, one principal source of disputation, and into which indeed the greater part of legal controversies may be resolved, will remain still, namely, "the competition of opposite analogies." When a point of law has been once adjudged, neither that question, nor any which completely, and in all its circumstances, corresponds with *that*, can be brought a second time into dispute: but questions arise which resemble this only indirectly and in part, in certain views and circumstances, and which may seem to bear an equal or a greater affinity to other adjudged cases; questions which can be brought within any fixed rule only by analogy, and which hold a relation by analogy to different

rules. It is by the urging of the different analogies that the contention of the bar is carried on: and it is in the comparison, adjustment, and reconciliation of them with one another; in the discerning of such distinctions; and in the framing of such a determination, as may either save the various rules alleged in the cause, or if that be impossible, may give up the weaker analogy to the stronger; that the sagacity and wisdom of the court are seen and exercised. Amongst a thousand instances of this, we may cite one of general notoriety, in the contest that has lately been agitated concerning literary property.—The personal industry which an author expends upon the composition of his work, bears so near a resemblance to that by which every other kind of property is earned, or deserved, or acquired; or rather there exists such a correspondency between what is created by the study of man's mind, and the production of his labour in any other way of applying it, that he seems entitled to the same exclusive, assignable, and perpetual, right in both; and that right to the same protection of law. This was the analogy contended for on one side. On the other hand, a book, as to the author's right in it, appears similar to an invention of art, as a machine, an engine, a medicine: and since the law permits these to be copied, or imitated, except where an exclusive use or sale is reserved to the inventor by patent, the same liberty should be allowed in the publication and sale of books. This was the analogy maintained by the advocates of an open trade. And the competition of these opposite analogies constituted the difficulty of the case, as far as the same was argued, or adjudged, upon principles of common law.—One example may serve to illustrate our meaning: but whoever takes up a volume of Reports, will find most of the arguments it contains, capable of the same analysis: although the analogies, it must be confessed, are sometimes so entangled as not to be easily unravelled, or even perceived.

Doubtful and obscure points of law are not however nearly so numerous as they are apprehended to be. Out of the multitude of causes which, in the course of each year, are brought to trial in the metropolis, or upon the circuits, there are few in which any point is reserved for the judgment of superior courts. Yet these few contain all the doubts with which the law is chargeable: for as to the rest, the uncertainty, as hath been shown above, is not in the law, but in the means of human information.

There are two peculiarities in the judicial constitution of this country, which do not carry with them that evidence of their propriety which recommends almost every other part of the system. The first of these is the rule which requires that juries be *unanimous* in their verdicts. To expect that twelve men, taken by lot out of a promiscuous multitude, should agree in their opinion upon points confessedly dubious, and upon which oftentimes the wisest judgments might be holden in suspense; or to suppose that any real *unanimity* or change of opinion, in the dissenting jurors, could be procured by confining them until they all consented to the same verdict, bespeaks more of the conceit of a barbarous age, than of the policy which could dictate such an institution as that of juries. Nevertheless, the effects of this rule are not so detrimental, as the rule itself is unreasonable;—in criminal prosecutions, it operates considerably in favour of the prisoner: for if a juror find it necessary to surrender to the obstinacy of others, he will much more readily resign his opinion on the side of mercy than of condemnation: in civil suits, it adds weight to the direction of the judge; for when a conference with one another does not seem likely to produce, in the jury, the agreement that is necessary, they will naturally close their disputes by a common submission to the opinion delivered from the bench. However, there seems to be less of the concurrence of separate judgments in the same conclusion, consequently less assurance that the conclusion is founded in reasons of apparent truth and justice, than if the decision were left to a plurality, or to some certain majority of voices.

The second circumstance in our constitution which, however it may succeed in practice, does not seem to have been suggested by any intelligible fitness in the nature of the thing, is the choice that is made of the *House of Lords* as a court of appeal from every civil court of judicature in the kingdom; and the last also and highest appeal to which the subject can resort. There appears to be nothing in the constitution of that assembly; in the education, habits, character, or professions, of the members who compose it; in the mode of their appointment, or the right by which they succeed to their places in it; that should qualify them for this arduous office; except perhaps, that the elevation of their rank and fortune affords a security against the offer and influence of small bribes. Officers of the army and navy, courtiers, ecclesiastics; young men who have just attained the age of twenty-one, and who have passed their youth in the dissipation and pursuits which commonly accompany the possession or inheritance of great fortunes; country-gentlemen, occupied in the management of their estates, or in the care of their domestic concerns and family interests; the greater part of the assembly born to their station, that is, placed in it by chance; most of the rest advanced to the peerage for services, and from motives, utterly unconnected with legal erudition:—these men compose the tribunal, to which the constitution entrusts the interpretation of her laws, and the ultimate decision of every dispute between her subjects. These are the men assigned to review judgments of law, pronounced by sages of the profession, who have spent their lives in the study and practice of the jurisprudence of their country. Such is the order which our ancestors have established. The effect only proves the truth of this maxim;—"That when a single institution is extremely dissonant from other parts of the system to which it belongs, it will always find some way of reconciling itself to the analogy which governs and pervades the rest." By constantly placing in the House of Lords some of the most eminent and experienced lawyers in the kingdom; by calling to their aid the advice of the judges, when any abstract question of law awaits their determination; by the almost implicit and undisputed deference, which the uninformed part of the house find it necessary to pay to the learning of their colleagues; the appeal to the House of Lords becomes in fact an appeal to the collected wisdom of our supreme courts of justice; receiving indeed solemnity, but little perhaps of direction, from

the presence of the assembly in which it is heard and determined.

These, however, even if real, are minute imperfections. A politician who should sit down to delineate a plan for the dispensation of public justice, guarded against all access to influence and corruption, and bringing together the separate advantages of knowledge and impartiality, would find, when he had done, that he had been transcribing the judicial constitution of England. And it may teach the most discontented amongst us to acquiesce in the government of his country, to reflect, that the pure, and wise, and equal administration of the laws, forms the first end and blessing of social union; and that this blessing is enjoyed by him in a perfection, which he will seek in vain in any other nation of the world.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Crimes and Punishments.

The proper end of human punishment is not the satisfaction of justice, but the prevention of crimes. By the satisfaction of justice, I mean the retribution of so much pain for so much guilt; which is the dispensation we expect at the hand of God, and which we are accustomed to consider as the order of things that perfect justice dictates and requires. In what sense, or whether with truth in any sense, justice may be said to demand the punishment of offenders, I do not now inquire: but I assert, that this *demand* is not the motive or occasion of human punishment. What would it be to the magistrate, that offences went altogether unpunished, if the impunity of the offenders were followed by no danger or prejudice to the commonwealth? The fear lest the escape of the criminal should encourage him, or others by his example, to repeat the same crime, or to commit different crimes, is the sole consideration which authorises the infliction of punishment by human laws. Now that, whatever it be, which is the cause and end of the punishment, ought undoubtedly to regulate the measure of its severity. But this cause appears to be founded, not in the guilt of the offender, but in the necessity of preventing the repetition of the offence: and hence results the reason, that crimes are not by any government punished in proportion to their guilt, nor in all cases ought to be so, but in proportion to the difficulty and the necessity of preventing them. Thus the stealing of goods privately out of a shop may not, in its moral quality, be more criminal than the stealing of them out of a house; yet being equally necessary and more difficult to be prevented, the law, in certain circumstances, denounces against it a severer punishment. The crime must be prevented by some means or other; and consequently, whatever means appear necessary to this end, whether they be proportionable to the guilt of the criminal or not, are adopted rightly, because they are adopted upon the principle which alone justifies the infliction of punishment at all. From the same consideration it also follows, that punishment ought not to be employed, much less rendered severe, when the crime can be prevented by any other means. Punishment is an evil to which the magistrate resorts only from its being necessary to the prevention of a greater. This necessity does not exist, when the end may be attained, that is, when the public may be defended from the effects of the crime, by any other expedient. The sanguinary laws which have been made against counterfeiting or diminishing the gold coin of the kingdom might be just until the method of detecting the fraud, by weighing the money, was introduced into general usage. Since that precaution was practised, these laws have slept; and an execution under them at this day would be deemed a measure of unjustifiable severity. The same principle accounts for a circumstance which has been often censured as an absurdity in the penal laws of this, and of most modern nations, namely, that breaches of trust are either not punished at all, or punished with less rigour than other frauds.—Wherefore is it, some have asked, that a violation of confidence, which increases the guilt, should mitigate the penalty?—This lenity, or rather forbearance, of the laws, is founded in the most reasonable distinction. A due circumspection in the choice of the persons whom they trust; caution in limiting the extent of that trust; or the requiring of sufficient security for the faithful discharge of it, will commonly guard men from injuries of this description; and the law will not interpose its sanctions to protect negligence and credulity, or to supply the place of domestic care and prudence. To be convinced that the law proceeds entirely upon this consideration, we have only to observe, that where the confidence is unavoidable,—where no practicable vigilance could watch the offender, as in the case of theft committed by a servant in the shop or dwelling house of his master, or upon property to which he must necessarily have access,—the sentence of the law is not less severe, and its execution commonly more certain and rigorous, than if no trust at all had intervened.

It is in pursuance of the same principle, which pervades indeed the whole system of penal jurisprudence, that the facility with which any species of crimes is perpetrated, has been generally deemed a reason for aggravating the punishment. Thus, sheep-stealing, horse-stealing, the stealing of cloth from tenters or bleaching grounds, by our laws, subject the offenders to sentence of death: not that these crimes are in their nature more heinous than many simple felonies which are punished by imprisonment or transportation, but because the property, being more exposed, requires the terror of capital punishment to protect it. This severity would be absurd and unjust, if the guilt of the offender were the immediate cause and measure of the punishment; but is a consistent and regular consequence of the supposition, that the right of punishment results from the necessity of preventing the crime; for if this be the end proposed, the severity of the punishment must be increased in proportion to the expedience and the difficulty of attaining this end; that is, in a proportion compounded of the mischief of the crime, and of the case with which it is executed.—The difficulty of discovery is a circumstance to be included in the same consideration. It constitutes indeed, with respect to the crime, the facility of which we speak. By how much therefore the detection of an offender is more rare and uncertain, by so much the more severe must be the punishment when he is detected. Thus the writing of incendiary letters, though in itself a pernicious and alarming injury, calls for a more condign and exemplary punishment, by the very obscurity with which the crime is committed.

From the justice of God, we are taught to look for a gradation of punishment exactly proportioned to the guilt of the offender: when therefore, in assigning the degrees of human punishment, we introduce considerations distinct from that guilt, and a proportion so varied by external circumstances, that equal crimes frequently undergo unequal punishments, or the less crime the greater: it is natural to demand the reason why a different measure of punishment should be expected from God, and observed by man; why that rule, which befits the absolute and perfect justice of the Deity, should not be the rule which ought to be pursued and imitated by human laws.—The solution of this difficulty must be sought for in those peculiar attributes of the Divine nature, which distinguish the dispensations of Supreme Wisdom from the proceedings of human judicature. A being whose knowledge penetrates every concealment, from the operation of whose will no art or flight can escape, and in whose hands punishment is sure; such a Being may conduct the moral government of his creation, in the best and wisest manner, by pronouncing a law that every crime shall finally receive a punishment proportioned to the guilt which it contains, abstracted from any foreign consideration whatever; and may testify his veracity to the spectators of his judgments, by carrying this law into strict execution. But when the care of the public safety is intrusted to men, whose authority over their fellow-creatures is limited by defects of power and knowledge; from whose utmost vigilance and sagacity the greatest offenders often lie hid; whose wisest precautions and speediest pursuit may be eluded by artifice or concealment; a different necessity, a new rule of proceeding, results from the very imperfection of their faculties. In their hands, the uncertainty of punishment must be compensated by the severity. The ease with which crimes are committed or concealed, must be counteracted by additional penalties and increased terrors. The very end for which human government is established, requires that its regulations be adapted to the suppression of crimes. This end, whatever it may do in the plans of Infinite Wisdom, does not, in the designation of temporal penalties, always coincide with the proportionate punishment of guilt.

There are two methods of administering penal justice.

The first method assigns capital punishment to few offences, and inflicts it invariably.

The second method assigns capital punishment to many kinds of offences, but inflicts it only upon a few examples of each kind.

The latter of which two methods has been long adopted in this country, where, of those who receive sentence of death, scarcely one in ten is executed. And the preference of this to the former method seems to be founded in the consideration, that the selection of proper objects for capital punishment principally depends upon circumstances, which, however easy to perceive in each particular case after the crime is committed, it is impossible to enumerate or define beforehand; or to ascertain however with that exactness which is requisite in legal descriptions. Hence, although it be necessary to fix by precise rules of law the boundary on one side, that is, the limit to which the punishment may be extended; and also that nothing less than the authority of the whole legislature be suffered to determine that boundary, and assign these rules; yet the mitigation of punishment, the exercise of lenity, may without danger be intrusted to the executive magistrate, whose discretion will operate upon those numerous, unforeseen, mutable, and indefinite circumstances, both of the crime and the criminal, which constitute or qualify the malignity of each offence. Without the power of relaxation lodged in a living authority, either some offenders would escape capital punishment, whom the public safety required to suffer; or some would undergo this punishment, where it was neither deserved nor necessary. For if judgment of death were reserved for one or two species of crimes only (which would probably be the case if that judgment was intended to be executed without exception,) crimes might occur of the most dangerous example, and accompanied with circumstances of heinous aggravation, which did not fall within *any* description of offences that the laws had made capital, and which consequently could not receive the punishment their own malignity and the public safety required.—What is worse, it would be known before-hand, that such crimes might be committed without danger to the offender's life. On the other hand, if to reach these possible cases, the whole class of offences to which they belong be subjected to pains of death, and no power of remitting this severity remain any where, the execution of the laws will become more sanguinary than the public compassion would endure, or than is necessary to the general security.

The law of England is constructed upon a different and a better policy. By the number of statutes creating capital offences, it sweeps into the net every crime which, under any possible circumstances, may merit the punishment of death: but when the execution of this sentence comes to be deliberated upon, a small proportion of each class are singled out, the general character, or the peculiar aggravations of whose crimes, render them fit examples of public justice. By this expedient, few actually suffer death, whilst the dread and danger of it hang over the crimes of many. The tenderness of the law cannot be taken advantage of. The life of the subject is spared as far as the necessity of restraint and intimidation permits; yet no one will adventure upon the commission of any enormous crime, from a knowledge that the laws have not provided for its punishment. The wisdom and humanity of this design furnish a just excuse for the multiplicity of capital offences, which the laws of England are accused of creating beyond those of other countries. The charge of cruelty is answered by observing, that these laws were never meant to be carried into indiscriminate execution; that the legislature, when it establishes its last and highest sanctions, trusts to the benignity of the crown to relax their severity as often as circumstances appear to palliate the offence, or even as often as those circumstances of aggravation are wanting which rendered this rigorous interposition necessary. Upon this plan, it is enough to vindicate the lenity of the laws, that *some* instances are to be found in each class of capital crimes, which require the restraint of capital punishment, and that this restraint could not be applied without subjecting the whole class to the same condemnation.

There is however one species of crimes, the making of which capital, can hardly, I think, be defended even upon the comprehensive principle just now stated:—I mean that of privately steal-

ing from the person. As every degree of force is excluded by the description of the crime, it will be difficult to assign an example, where either the amount or circumstances of the theft place it upon a level with those dangerous attempts to which the punishment of death should be confined. It will be still more difficult to show, that, without gross and culpable negligence on the part of the sufferer, such examples can ever become so frequent, as to make it necessary to constitute a class of capital offences, of very wide and large extent.

The prerogative of pardon is properly reserved to the chief magistrate. The power of suspending the laws is a privilege of too high a nature to be committed to many hands, or to those of any inferior officer in the state. The king also can best collect the advice by which his resolutions should be governed: and is at the same time removed at the greatest distance from the influence of private motives. But let this power be deposited where it will, the exercise of it ought to be regarded, not as a favour to be yielded to solicitation, granted to friendship, or, least of all, to be made subservient to the conciliating or gratifying of political attachments, but as a judicial act; as a deliberation to be conducted with the same character of impartiality, with the same exact and diligent attention to the proper merits and circumstances of the case, as that which the judge upon the bench was expected to maintain and show in the trial of the prisoner's guilt. The questions, whether the prisoner be guilty, and whether, being guilty, he ought to be executed, are equally questions of public justice. The adjudication of the latter question is as much a function of magistracy, as the trial of the former. The public welfare is interested in both. The conviction of an offender should depend upon nothing but the proof of his guilt; nor the execution of the sentence upon any thing beside the quality and circumstances of his crime. It is necessary to the good order of society, and to the reputation and authority of government, that this be known and believed to be the case in each part of the proceeding. Which reflections show, that the admission of extrinsic or oblique considerations, in dispensing the power of pardon, is a crime, in the authors and advisers of such unmerited partiality, of the same nature with that of corruption in a judge.

Aggravations, which ought to guide the magistrate in the selection of objects of condign punishment, are principally these three,—repetition, cruelty, combination. The first two, it is manifest, add to every reason upon which the justice or the necessity of rigorous measures can be founded; and with respect to the last circumstance, it may be observed, that when thieves and robbers are once collected into gangs, their violence becomes more formidable, the confederates more desperate, and the difficulty of defending the public against their depredations much greater, than in the case of solitary adventurers. Which several considerations compose a distinction that is properly adverted to, in deciding upon the fate of convicted malefactors.

In crimes, however, which are perpetrated by a multitude, or by a gang, it is proper to separate, in the punishment, the ringleader from his followers, the principal from his accomplices, and even the person who struck the blow, broke the lock, or first entered the house, from those who joined him in the felony; not so much on account of any distinction in the guilt of the offenders, as for the sake of casting an obstacle in the way of such confederacies, by rendering it difficult for the confederates to settle who shall begin the attack, or to find a man amongst their number willing to expose himself to greater danger than his associates. This is another instance in which the punishment which expediency directs, does not pursue the exact proportion of the crime.

Injuries effected by terror and violence, are those which it is the first and chief concern of legal government to repress; because their extent is unlimited; because no private precaution can protect the subject against them; because they endanger life and safety, as well as property; and lastly, because they render the condition of society wretched, by a sense of personal insecurity. These reasons do not apply to frauds which circumspection may prevent; which must wait for opportunity; which can proceed only to certain limits; and by the apprehension of which, although the business of life be incommoded, life itself is not made miserable. The appearance of this distinction has led some humane writers to express a wish, that capital punishments might be confined to crimes of violence.

In estimating the comparative malignancy of crimes of violence, regard is to be had, not only to the proper and intended mischief of the crime, but to the fright occasioned by the attack, to the general alarm excited by it in others, and to the consequences which may attend future attempts of the same kind. Thus, in affixing the punishment of burglary, or of breaking into dwelling-houses by night, we are to consider not only the peril to which the most valuable property is exposed by this crime, and which may be called the direct mischief of it, but the danger also of murder in case of resistance, or for the sake of preventing discovery; and the universal dread with which the silent and defenceless hours of rest and sleep must be disturbed, were attempts of this sort to become frequent; and which dread alone, even without the mischief which is the object of it, is not only a public evil, but almost of all evils the most insupportable. These circumstances place a difference between the breaking into a dwelling-house by day, and by night; which difference obtains in the punishment of the offence by the law of Moses, and is probably to be found in the judicial codes of most countries, from the earliest ages to the present.

Of frauds, or of injuries which are effected without force, the most noxious kinds are,—forgeries, counterfeiting or diminishing of the coin, and the stealing of letters in the course of their conveyance; inasmuch as these practices tend to deprive the public of accommodations, which not only improve the conveniencies of social life, but are essential to the prosperity, and even the existence, of commerce. Of these crimes it may be said, that although they seem to affect property alone, the mischief of their operation does not terminate there. For let it be supposed, that the remissness or lenity of the laws should, in any country, suffer offences of this sort to grow into such a frequency, as to render the use of money, the circulation of bills, or the public conveyance of letters, no longer safe or practicable; what would follow, but that every species of trade and of activity must decline under these dis-

couragements; the sources of subsistence fail, by which the inhabitants of the country are supported; the country itself, where the intercourse of civil life was so endangered and defective, be deserted; and that, beside the distress and poverty which the loss of employment would produce to the industrious and valuable part of the existing community, a rapid depopulation must take place, each generation becoming less numerous than the last; till solitude and barrenness overspread the land; until a desolation similar to what obtains in many countries of Asia, which were once the most civilized and frequented parts of the world, succeed in the place of crowded cities, of cultivated fields, of happy and well peopled regions?—When therefore we carry forwards our views to the more distant, but not less certain consequences of these crimes, we perceive that, though no living creature be destroyed by them, yet human life is diminished: that an offence, the particular consequence of which deprives only an individual of a small portion of his property, and which even in its general tendency seems to do nothing more than obstruct the enjoyment of certain public conveniencies, may nevertheless, by its ultimate effects, conclude in the laying waste of human existence. This observation will enable those who regard the divine rule of "life for life, and blood for blood," as the only authorized and justifiable measure of capital punishment, to perceive, with respect to the effects and quality of the actions, a greater resemblance than they suppose to exist between certain atrocious frauds, and those crimes which attack personal safety.

In the case of forgeries, there appears a substantial difference between the forging of bills of exchange, or of securities which are circulated, and of which the circulation and currency are found to serve and facilitate valuable purposes of commerce; and the forging of bonds, leases, mortgages, or of instruments which are not commonly transferred from one hand to another; because in the former case, credit is necessarily given to the signature; and without that credit the negotiation of such property could not be carried on, nor the public utility, sought from it, be attained: in the other case, all possibility of deceit might be precluded, by a direct communication between the parties, or by due care in the choice of their agents, with little interruption to business, and without destroying, or much encumbering, the uses for which these instruments are calculated. This distinction I apprehend to be not only real, but precise enough to afford a line of division between forgeries, which as the law now stands, are almost universally capital, and punished with undistinguishing severity.

Perjury is another crime, of the same class and magnitude. And, when we consider what reliance is necessarily placed upon oaths; that all judicial decisions proceed upon testimony; that consequently there is not a right that a man possesses, of which false witnesses may not deprive him; that reputation, property, and life itself, lie open to the attempts of perjury; that it may often be committed without a possibility of contradiction or discovery; that the success and prevalency of this vice tend to introduce the most grievous and fatal injustice into the administration of human affairs, or such a distrust of testimony as must create universal embarrassment and confusion:—when we reflect upon these mischiefs, we shall be brought, probably, to agree with the opinion of those who contend that perjury, in its punishment, especially that which is attempted in solemn evidence, and in the face of a court of justice, should be placed upon a level with the most flagitious frauds.

The obtaining of money by secret threats, whether we regard the difficulty with which the crime is traced out, the odious imputations to which it may lead, or the profligate conspiracies that are sometimes formed to carry it into execution, deserves to be reckoned amongst the worst species of robbery.

The frequency of capital executions in this country owes it necessity to three causes;—much liberty, great cities, and the want of a punishment short of death, possessing a sufficient degree of terror. And if the taking away of the life of malefactors be more rare in other countries than in ours, the reason will be found in some difference in these articles. The liberties of a free people, and still more the jealousy with which these liberties are watched, and by which they are preserved, permit not those precautions and restraints, that inspection, scrutiny, and control, which are exercised with success in arbitrary governments. For example, neither the spirit of the laws, nor of the people, will suffer the detention or confinement of suspected persons, without proofs of their guilt, which it is often impossible to obtain; nor will they allow that masters of families be obliged to record and render up a description of the strangers or inmates whom they entertain; nor that an account be demanded, at the pleasure of the magistrate, of each man's time, employment, and means of subsistence; nor securities to be required when these accounts appear unsatisfactory or dubious; nor men to be apprehended upon the mere suggestion of idleness or vagrancy; nor to be confined to certain districts; nor the inhabitants of each district to be made responsible for one another's behaviour; nor passports to be exacted from all persons entering or leaving the kingdom: least of all will they tolerate the appearance of an armed force, or of military law; or suffer the streets and public roads to be guarded and patrolled by soldiers; or lastly, intrust the police with such discretionary powers, as may make sure of the guilty, however they involve the innocent. These expedients, although arbitrary and rigorous, are many of them effectual: and in proportion as they render the commission or concealment of crimes more difficult, they subtract from the necessity of severe punishment.—*Great cities* multiply crimes, by presenting easier opportunities, and more incentives to libertinism, which in low life is commonly the introductory stage to other enormities; by collecting thieves and robbers into the same neighbourhood, which enables them to form communications and confederacies, that increase their art and courage, as well as strength and wickedness; but principally by the refuge they afford to villany, in the means of concealment, and of subsisting in secrecy, which crowded towns supply to men of every description. These temptations and facilities can only be counteracted by adding to the number of capital punishments.—But a *third* cause, which increases the frequency of capital executions, in England, is, a defect of the laws, in not being provided with any other punishment than that of death, sufficiently terrible to keep offenders in awe. Transportation, which is the

sentence second in the order of severity, appears to me to answer the purpose of example very imperfectly: not only because exile is in reality a slight punishment to those who have neither property, nor friends, nor reputation, nor regular means of subsistence, at home; and because their situation becomes little worse by their crime, than it was before they committed it; but because the punishment, whatever it be, is unobserved and unknown. A transported convict may suffer under his sentence, but his sufferings are removed from the view of his countrymen: his misery is unseen; his condition strikes no terror into the minds of those for whose warning and admonition it was intended. This chasm in the scale of punishment produces also two farther imperfections in the administration of penal justice;—the first is, that the same punishment is extended to crimes of very different character and malignancy: the second, that punishments separated by a great interval, are assigned to crimes hardly distinguishable in their guilt and mischief.

The end of punishment is two-fold;—*amendment*, and *example*. In the first of these, the *reformation* of criminals, little has ever been effected, and little, I fear, is practicable. From every species of punishment that has hitherto been devised, from imprisonment and exile, from pain and infamy, malefactors return more hardened in their crimes, and more instructed. If there be any thing that shakes the soul of a confirmed villain, it is the expectation of approaching death. The horrors of this situation may cause such a wrench in the mental organs, as to give them a holding turn: and I think it probable, that many of those who are executed, would, if they were delivered at the point of death, retain such a remembrance of their sensations, as might preserve them, unless urged by extreme want, from relapsing into their former crimes. But this is an experiment that, from its nature, cannot be repeated often.

Of the *reforming* punishments which have not yet been tried, none promises so much success as that of *solitary* imprisonment, or the confinement of criminals in separate apartments. This improvement augments the terror of the punishment; secludes the criminal from the society of his fellow-prisoners, in which society the worse are sure to corrupt the better; weans him from the knowledge of his companions, and from the love of that turbulent, precarious life in which his vices had engaged him: is calculated to raise up in him reflections on the folly of his choice, and to dispose his mind to such bitter and continued penitence, as may produce a lasting alteration in the principles of his conduct.

As aversion to labour is the cause from which half of the vices of low life deduce their origin and continuance, punishments ought to be contrived with a view to the conquering of this disposition. Two opposite expedients have been recommended for this purpose; the one, solitary confinement with hard labour; the other, solitary confinement with nothing to do. Both expedients seek the same end;—to reconcile the idle to a life of industry. The former hopes to effect this by making labour habitual; the latter, by making idleness insupportable: and the preference of one method to the other depends upon the question, whether a man is more likely to betake himself, of his own accord, to work, who has been accustomed to employment, or who has been distressed by the want of it. When jails are once provided for the *separate* confinement of prisoners, which both proposals require, the choice between them may soon be determined by experience. If labour be exacted, I would leave the whole, or a portion, of the earnings to the prisoner's use, and I would debar him from any other provision or supply; that his subsistence, however coarse and penurious, may be proportioned to his diligence, and that he may taste the advantage of industry together with the toil. I would go further; I would measure the confinement, not by the duration of time, but by quantity of work, in order both to excite industry, and to render it more voluntary. But the principal difficulty remains still; namely, how to dispose of criminals after their enlargement. By a rule of life, which is perhaps too invariably and indiscriminately adhered to, no one will receive a man or woman out of a jail, into any service or employment whatever. This is the common misfortune of public punishment, that they preclude the offender from all honest means of future support.* It seems incumbent upon the state to secure a maintenance to those who are willing to work for it; and yet it is absolutely necessary to divide criminals as far asunder from one another as possible. Whether male prisoners might not, after the term of their confinement was expired, be distributed in the country, detained within certain limits, and employed upon the public roads; and females be remitted to the overseers of country parishes, to be there furnished with dwellings, and with the materials and implements of occupation;—whether by these, or by what other methods, it may be possible to effect the two purposes of *employment* and *dispersion*, well merits the attention of all who are anxious to perfect the internal regulation of their country.

Torture is applied either to obtain confessions of guilt, or to exasperate or prolong the pains of death. No bodily punishment, however excruciating or long-continued, receives the name of torture, unless it be designed to kill the criminal by a more lingering death; or to extort from him the discovery of some secret, which is supposed to lie concealed in his breast. *The question by torture* appears to be equivocal in its effects: for since extremity of pain, and not any consciousness of remorse in the mind, produces those effects: an innocent man may sink under the torment, as well as he who is guilty. The latter has as much to fear from yielding, as the former. The instant and almost irresistible desire of relief may draw from one sufferer false accusations of himself or others, as it may sometimes extract the truth out of another. This ambiguity renders the use of torture, as a means of procuring information in criminal proceedings, liable to the risk of grievous and irreparable injustice. For which reason, though recommended by ancient and general example, it has been properly exploded from the mild and cautious system of penal jurisprudence established in this country.

Barbarous spectacles of human agony are justly found fault with, as tending to harden and deprave the public feelings, and to destroy that sympathy

* Until this inconvenience be remedied, small offences had perhaps better go unpunished: I do not mean that the law should exempt them from punishment, but that private persons should be tender in prosecuting them.

with which the sufferings of our fellow-creatures ought always to be seen; or, if no effect of this kind follow from them, they counteract in some measure their own design, by sinking men's abhorrence of the crime in their commiseration of the criminal. But if a mode of execution could be devised, which would augment the horror of the punishment, without offending or impairing the public sensibility by cruel or unseemly exhibitions of death, it might add something to the efficacy of the example: and, by being reserved for a few atrocious crimes, might also enlarge the scale of punishment; an addition to which seems wanting; for, as the matter remains at present, you hang a malefactor for a simple robbery, and can do no more to the villain who has poisoned his father. Somewhat of the sort we have been describing, was the proposal, not long since suggested, of casting murderers into a den of wild beasts, where they would perish in a manner dreadful to the imagination, yet concealed from the view.

Infamous punishments are mismanaged in this country, with respect both to the crimes and the criminals. In the first place, they ought to be confined to offences which are holden in undisputed and universal detestation. To condemn to the pillory the author or editor of a libel against the state, who has rendered himself the favourite of a party, if not of the people, by the very act for which he stands there, is to gratify the offender, and to expose the law to mockery and insult. In the second place; the delinquents who receive this sentence, are for the most part such as have long ceased either to value reputation, or to fear shame; of whose happiness, and of whose enjoyments, character makes no part. Thus the low ministers of libertinism, the keepers of bawdy or disorderly houses, are threatened in vain with a punishment that affects a sense which they have not; that applies solely to the imagination, to the virtue and the pride of human nature. The pillory, or any other infamous distinction, might be employed rightly, and with effect, in the punishment of some offences of higher life; as of frauds and peculation in office; of collusions and connivances, by which the public treasury is defrauded; of breaches of trust; of perjury, and subornation of perjury; of the clandestine and forbidden sale of places; of flagrant abuses of authority, or neglect of duty; and lastly, of corruption in the exercise of confidential or judicial offices. In all which, the more elevated was the station of the criminal, the more signal and conspicuous would be the triumph of justice.

The *certainty* of punishment is of more consequence than the severity. Criminals do not so much flatter themselves with the lenity of the sentence, as with the hope of escaping. They are not so apt to compare what they gain by the crime with what they may suffer from the punishment, as to encourage themselves with the chance of concealment or flight. For which reason, a vigilant magistracy, an accurate police, a proper distribution of force and intelligence, together with due rewards for the discovery and apprehension of malefactors, and an undeviating impartiality in carrying the laws into execution, contribute more to the restraint and suppression of crimes than any violent exacerbations of punishment. And, for the same reason, of all contrivances directed to this end, those perhaps are most effectual which facilitate the conviction of criminals. The offence of counterfeiting the coin could not be checked by all the terrors and the utmost severity of law, whilst the act of coining was necessary to be established by specific proof. The statute which made possession of the implements of coining capital, that is, which constituted that possession complete evidence of the offender's guilt, was the first thing that gave force and efficacy to the denunciations of law upon this subject. The statute of James the First, relative to the murder of bastard children, which ordains that the concealment of the birth should be deemed incontestable proof of the charge, though a harsh law, was, in like manner with the former, well calculated to put a stop to the crime.

It is upon the principle of this observation, that I apprehend much harm to have been done to the community, by the over-strained scrupulousness, or weak timidity, of juries, which demands often such proof of a prisoner's guilt, as the nature and secrecy of his crime scarce possibly admit of; and which holds it the part of a *safe* conscience not to condemn any man, whilst there exists the minutest possibility of his innocence. Any story they may happen to have heard or read, whether real or feigned, in which courts of justice have been misled by presumptions of guilt, is enough, in their minds, to found an acquittal upon, where positive proof is wanting. I do not mean that juries should indulge conjectures, should magnify suspicions into proofs, or even that they should weigh probabilities in *gold scales:* but when the preponderation of evidence is so manifest as to persuade every private understanding of the prisoner's guilt; when it furnishes the degree of credibility upon which men decide and act in all other doubts, and which experience hath shown that they may decide and act upon with sufficient safety; to reject such proof, from an insinuation of uncertainty that belongs to all human affairs, and from a general dread lest the charge of innocent blood should lie at their doors, is a conduct, which, however natural to a mind studious of its own quiet, is authorised by no considerations of rectitude or utility. It counteracts the care and damps the activity of government; it holds out public encouragement to villany, by confessing the impossibility of bringing villains to justice; and that species of encouragement which, as hath been just now observed, the minds of such men are most apt to entertain and dwell upon.

There are two popular maxims, which seem to have a considerable influence in producing the injudicious acquittals of which we complain. One is:—"That circumstantial evidence falls short of positive proof." This assertion, in the unqualified sense in which it is applied, is not true. A concurrence of well-authenticated circumstances compose a stronger ground of assurance than positive testimony, unconfirmed by circumstances, usually affords. Circumstances cannot lie. The conclusion also which results from them, though deduced by only probable inference, is commonly more to be relied upon than the veracity of an unsupported solitary witness. The danger of being deceived is less, the actual instances of deception are fewer, in the one case than the other. What is called positive proof in criminal matters, as where a man swears to the person of the prisoner, and that he actually saw him commit the crime with which he is charged, may be founded in the mistake or per-

jury of a single witness.—Such mistakes, and such perjuries, are not without many examples. Whereas, to impose upon a court of justice a chain of *circumstantial* evidence in support of a fabricated accusation, requires such a number of false witnesses as seldom meet together; an union also of skill and wickedness which is still more rare; and, after all, this species of proof lies much more open to discussion, and is more likely, if false, to be contradicted, or to betray itself by some unforeseen inconsistency, than that direct proof, which, being confined within the knowledge of a single person, which, appealing to, or standing connected with, no external or collateral circumstances, is incapable, by its very simplicity, of being confronted with opposite probabilities.

The other maxim, which deserves a similar examination, is this:—"That it is better that ten guilty persons escape, than that one innocent man should suffer." If by saying it is *better*, be meant that it is more for the public advantage, the proposition, I think, cannot be maintained. The security of civil life, which is essential to the value and the enjoyment of every blessing it contains, and the interruption of which is followed by universal misery and confusion, is protected chiefly by the dread of punishment. The misfortune of an individual (for such may the sufferings, or even the death, of an innocent person be called when they are occasioned by no evil intention,) cannot be placed in competition with this object. I do not contend that the life or safety of the meanest subject ought, in any case, to be knowingly sacrificed: no principle of judicature, no end of punishment, can ever require *that*.

But when certain rules of adjudication must be pursued, when certain degrees of credibility must be accepted, in order to reach the crimes with which the public are infested; courts of justice should not be deterred from the application of these rules by *every* suspicion of danger, or by the mere possibility of confounding the innocent with the guilty.—They ought rather to reflect, that he who falls by a mistaken sentence, may be considered as falling for his country; whilst he suffers under the operation of those rules, by the general effect and tendency of which the welfare of the community is maintained and upholden.

CHAPTER X.

Of Religious Establishments and of Toleration.

"A RELIGIOUS establishment is no part of Christianity: it is only the means of inculcating it." Amongst the Jews, the rights and offices, the order, family, and succession of the priesthood, were marked out by the authority which declared the law itself. These, therefore, were *parts* of the Jewish religion, as well as the means of transmitting it. Not so with the new institution. It cannot be proved that any form of church-government was laid down in the Christian, as it had been in the Jewish Scriptures, with a view of fixing a constitution for succeeding ages; and which constitution, consequently, the disciples of Christianity would every where, and at all times, by the very law of their religion, be obliged to adopt. Certainly, no command for this purpose was delivered by Christ himself; and if it be shown that the apostles ordained bishops and presbyters amongst their first converts, it must be remembered that deacons also and deaconesses were appointed by them, with functions very dissimilar to any which obtain in the church at present. The truth seems to have been, that such offices were at first erected in the Christian church, as the good order, the instruction, and the exigencies of the society at that time required, without any intention, at least without any declared design, of regulating the appointment, authority, or the distinction, of Christian ministers under future circumstances. This reserve, if we may so call it, in the Christian Legislator, is sufficiently accounted for by two considerations:—First, that no precise constitution could be framed, which would suit with the condition of Christianity in its primitive state, and with that which it was to assume when it should be advanced into a national religion: Secondly, that a particular designation of office or authority amongst the ministers of the new religion, might have so interfered with the arrangements of civil policy, as to have formed, in some countries, a considerable obstacle to the progress and reception of the religion itself.

The authority therefore of a church-establishment is founded in its utility: and whenever, upon this principle, we deliberate concerning the form, propriety, or comparative excellency of different establishments, the single view under which we ought to consider any of them is, that of "a scheme of instruction;" the single end we ought to propose by them is, "the preservation and communication of religious knowledge." Every other idea, and every other end, that have been mixed with this, as the making of the church an engine, or even an *ally*, of the state; converting it into the means of strengthening or diffusing influence; or regarding it as a support of regal, in opposition to popular forms of government; have served only to debase the institution, and to introduce into it numerous corruptions and abuses.

The notion of a religious establishment comprehends three things:—a clergy, or an order of men secluded from other professions to attend upon the offices of religion; a legal provision for the maintenance of the clergy; and the confining of that provision to the teachers of a particular sect of Christianity. If any one of these three things be wanting, if there be no clergy as amongst the Quakers; or if the clergy have no other provision than what they derive from the voluntary contribution of their hearers; or if the provision which the laws assign to the support of religion be extended to various sects and denominations of Christians; there exists no national religion or established church, according to the sense which these terms are usually made to convey. He, therefore, who would defend ecclesiastical establishments, must show the separate utility of these three essential parts of their constitution:—

I. The question first in order upon the subject, as well as the most fundamental in its importance, is, whether the knowledge and profession of Christianity can be maintained in a country without a class of men set apart by public authority to the study and teaching of religion, and to the conducting of public worship; and for these purposes secluded from other employments. I add this last circumstance, because in it consists, as I take it, the substance of the controversy. Now it must be remembered, that Christianity is an historical

religion, founded in facts which are related to have passed, upon discourses which were holden, and letters which were written, in a remote age, and distant country of the world, as well as under a state of life and manners, and during the prevalency of opinions, customs, and institutions, very unlike any which are found amongst mankind at present. Moreover, this religion, having been first published in the country of Judea, and being built upon the more ancient religion of the Jews, is necessarily and intimately connected with the sacred writings, with the history and polity of that singular people: to which must be added, that the records of both revelations are preserved in languages which have long ceased to be spoken in any part of the world. Books which come down to us from times so remote, and under so many causes of unavoidable obscurity, cannot, it is evident, be understood without study and preparation. The languages must be learned. The various writings which these volumes contain, must be carefully compared with one another, and with themselves. What remains of contemporary authors, or of authors connected with the age, the country, or the subject of our scriptures, must be perused and consulted, in order to interpret doubtful forms of speech, and to explain allusions which refer to objects or usages that no longer exist. Above all, the modes of expression, the habits of reasoning and argumentation, which were then in use, and to which the discourses even of inspired teachers were necessarily adapted, must be sufficiently known, and can only be known at all by a due acquaintance with ancient literature. And lastly, to establish the genuineness and integrity of the canonical scriptures themselves, a series of testimony, recognising the notoriety and reception of these books, must be deduced from times near to those of their first publication, down the succession of ages through which they have been transmitted to us. The qualifications necessary for such researches demand, it is confessed, a degree of leisure, and a kind of education, inconsistent with the exercise of any other profession.—But how few are there amongst the clergy, from whom any thing of this sort can be expected! how small a proportion of their number, who seem likely either to augment the fund of sacred literature, or even to collect what is already known! —To this objection it may be replied, that we sow many seeds to raise one flower. In order to produce a *few* capable of improving and continuing the stock of Christian erudition, leisure and opportunity must be afforded to great numbers. Original knowledge of this kind can never be universal; but it is of the utmost importance, and it is enough that there be, at all times, found *some* qualified for such inquiries, and in whose concurring and independent conclusions upon each subject, the rest of the Christian community may safely confide: whereas, without an order of clergy educated for the purpose, and led to the prosecution of these studies by the habits, the leisure, and the object, of their vocation, it may well be questioned whether the learning itself would not have been lost, by which the records of our faith are interpreted and defended. We contend, therefore, that an order of clergy is necessary to perpetuate the evidences of Revelation, and to interpret the obscurity of those ancient writings, in which the religion is contained. But besides this, which forms, no doubt, one design of their institution, the more ordinary offices of public teaching, and of conducting public worship, call for qualifications not usually to be met with amidst the employments of civil life. It has been acknowledged by some, who cannot be suspected of making unnecessary concessions in favour of establishments, "to be barely *possible*, that a person who was never educated for the office should acquit himself with decency as a public teacher of religion." And that surely must be a very defective policy which trusts to *possibilities* for success, when provision is to be made for regular and general instruction. Little objection to this argument can be drawn from the example of the Quakers, who, it may be said, furnish an experimental proof that the worship and profession of Christianity may be upholden without a separate clergy. These sectaries every where subsist in conjunction with a regular establishment. They have access to the writings, they profit by the labours, of the clergy, in common with other Christians. They participate in that general diffusion of religious knowledge, which the constant teaching of a more regular ministry keeps up in the country: with such aids, and under such circumstances, the defects of a plan may not be much felt, although the plan itself be altogether unfit for general imitation.

2. If then an order of clergy be necessary, if it be necessary also to seclude them from the employments and profits of other professions, it is evident they ought to be enabled to derive a maintenance from their own. Now this maintenance must either depend upon the voluntary contributions of their hearers, or arise from revenues assigned by authority of law. To the scheme of voluntary contribution there exists this insurmountable objection, that few would ultimately contribute any thing at all. However the zeal of a sect, or the novelty of a change, might support such an experiment for a while, no reliance could be placed upon it as a general and permanent provision. It is at all times a bad constitution, which presents temptations of interest in opposition to the duties of religion; or which makes the offices of religion expensive to those who attend upon them; or which allows pretences of conscience to be an excuse for not sharing in a public burthen. If, by declining to frequent religious assemblies, men could save their money, at the same time that they indulged their indolence, and their disinclination to exercises of seriousness and reflection; or, if by dissenting from the national religion, they could be excused from contributing to the support of the ministers of religion; it is to be feared that many would take advantage of the option which was thus imprudently left open to them, and that this liberty might finally operate to the decay of virtue, and an irrecoverable forgetfulness of all religion in the country. Is there not too much reason to fear, that, if it were referred to the discretion of each neighbourhood, whether they would maintain amongst them a teacher of religion or not, many districts would remain unprovided with any; that, with the difficulties which encumber every measure requiring the co-operation of numbers, and where each individual of the number has an interest secretly pleading against the success of the measure itself, associations for the support of Christian worship and instruction would neither be numerous nor long continued? The devout and pious might lament in vain the want or the

distance of a religious assembly; they could not form or maintain one, without the concurrence of neighbours who felt neither their zeal nor their liberality.

From the difficulty with which congregations would be established and upheld upon the *voluntary* plan, let us carry our thoughts to the condition of those who are to officiate in them. Preaching, in time, would become a mode of begging. With what sincerity, or with what dignity, can a preacher dispense the truths of Christianity, whose thoughts are perpetually solicited to the reflection how he may increase his subscription? His eloquence, if he possesses any, resembles rather the exhibition of a player who is computing the profits of his theatre, than the simplicity of a man who, feeling himself the awful expectations of religion, is seeking to bring others to such a sense and understanding of their duty as may save their souls. Moreover, a little experience of the disposition of the common people will in every country inform us, that it is one thing to edify them in Christian knowledge, and another to gratify their taste for vehement, impassioned oratory; that he, not only whose success, but whose subsistence, depends upon collecting and pleasing a crowd, must resort to other arts than the acquirement and communication of sober and profitable instruction. For a preacher to be thus at the mercy of his audience; to be obliged to adapt his doctrines to the pleasure of a capricious multitude; to be continually affecting a style and manner neither natural to him, nor agreeable to his judgment; to live in constant bondage to tyrannical and insolent directors; are circumstances so mortifying, not only to the pride of the human heart, but to the virtuous love of independency, that they are rarely submitted to without a sacrifice of principle, and a deprivation of character;—at least it may be pronounced, that a ministry so degraded would fall into the lowest hands: for it would be found impossible to engage men of worth and ability in so precarious and humiliating a profession.

If, in deference then to these reasons, it be admitted, that a legal provision for the clergy, compulsory upon those who contribute to it, is expedient; the next question will be, whether this provision should be confined to one sect of Christianity, or extended indifferently to all? Now it should be observed, that this question never *can* offer itself where the people are agreed in their religious opinions; and that it never *ought* to arise, where a system may be framed of doctrines and worship wide enough to comprehend their disagreement; and which might satisfy all, by uniting all in the articles of their common faith, and in a mode of divine worship that omits every subject of controversy or offence. Where such a comprehension is practicable, the comprehending religion ought to be made that of the state. But if this be despaired of; if religious opinions exist, not only so various, but so contradictory, as to render it impossible to reconcile them to each other, or to any one confession of faith, rule of discipline, or form of worship; if, consequently, separate congregations and different sects must unavoidably continue in the country: under such circumstances, whether the laws ought to establish one sect in preference to the rest, that is, whether they ought to confer the provision assigned to the maintenance of religion upon the teachers of one system of doctrines alone, becomes a question of necessary discussion and of great importance. And whatever we may determine concerning speculative rights and abstract proprieties, when we set about the framing of an ecclesiastical constitution adapted to real life, and to the actual state of religion in the country, we shall find this question very nearly related to and principally indeed dependent upon another; namely, "In what way, or by whom, ought the ministers of religion to be *appointed?*" If the species of patronage be retained to which we are accustomed in this country, and which allows private individuals to nominate teachers of religion for districts and congregations to which they are absolute strangers; without some test proposed to the persons nominated, the utmost discordancy of religious opinions might arise between the several teachers and their respective congregations. A popish patron might appoint a priest to say mass to a congregation of protestants; an episcopal clergyman be sent to officiate in a parish of presbyterians; or a presbyterian divine to inveigh against the errors of popery before an audience of papists. The requisition then of subscription, or any other test by which the national religion is guarded, may be considered merely as a restriction upon the exercise of private patronage. The laws speak to the private patron thus:—"Of those whom we have previously pronounced to be fitly qualified to teach religion, we allow you to select one; but we do not allow you to decide what religion shall be established in a particular district of the country; for which decision you are no wise fitted by any qualifications which, as a private patron, you may happen to possess. If it be necessary that the point be determined for the inhabitants by any other will than their own, it is surely better that it should be determined by a deliberate resolution of the legislature, than by the casual inclination of an individual, by whom the right is purchased, or to whom it devolves as a mere secular inheritance." Wherescever, therefore, this constitution of patronage is adopted, a national religion, or the legal preference of one particular religion to all others, must almost necessarily accompany it. But, secondly, let it be supposed that the appointment of the minister of religion was in every parish left to the choice of the parishioners; might not this choice, we ask, be safely exercised without its being limited to the teachers of any particular sect? The effect of such a liberty must be, that a papist, or a presbyterian, a methodist, a Moravian, or an anabaptist, would successively gain possession of the pulpit, according as a majority of the party happened at each election to prevail.—Now, with what violence the conflict would upon every vacancy be renewed; what bitter animosities would be revived, or rather be constantly fed and kept alive, in the neighbourhood; with what unconquerable aversion the teacher, and his religion would be received by the defeated party, may be foreseen by those who reflect with how much passion every dispute is carried on, in which the name of religion can be made to mix itself; much more where the cause itself is concerned so immediately as it would be in this. Or, thirdly, if the state appoint the ministers of religion, this constitution will differ little from the establishment of a national religion; for the state will, undoubtedly, appoint those, and those alone, whose religious opinions, or rather whose religious denominations, agree with its own; unless it be thought that any

thing would be gained to religious liberty by transferring the choice of the national religion from the legislature of the country, to the magistrate who administers the executive government.—The only plan which seems to render the legal maintenance of a clergy practicable, without the legal preference of one sect of Christians to others, is that of an experiment which is said to be attempted or designed in some of the new states of North America. The nature of the plan is thus described:—A tax is levied upon the inhabitants for the general support of religion; the collector of the taxes goes round with a register in his hand, in which are inserted, at the head of so many distinct columns, the names of the several religious sects that are professed in the country. The person who is called upon for the assessment, as soon as he has paid his quota, subscribes his name and the sum in which of the columns he pleases; and the amount of what is collected in each column is paid over to the minister of that denomination. In this scheme it is not left to the option of the subject, whether he will contribute, or how much he shall contribute, to the maintenance of a christian ministry; it is only referred to his choice to determine by what sect his contribution shall be received. The above arrangement is undoubtedly the best that has been proposed upon this principle; it bears the appearance of liberality and justice; it may contain some solid advantages; nevertheless, it labours under inconveniences which will be found, I think, upon trial, to overbalance all its recommendations. It is scarcely compatible with that which is the first requisite in an ecclesiastical establishment,—the division of the country into parishes of a commodious extent. If the parishes be small, and ministers of every denomination be stationed in each, (which the plan seems to suppose,) the expense of their maintenance will become too burthensome a charge for the country to support. If, to reduce the expense, the districts be enlarged, the place of assembling will oftentimes be too far removed from the residence of the persons who ought to resort to it. Again: the making the pecuniary success of the different teachers of religion to depend on the number and wealth of their respective followers, would naturally generate strifes and indecent jealousies amongst them; as well as produce a polemical and proselyting spirit, founded in or mixed with views of private gain, which would both deprave the principles of the clergy, and distract the country with endless contentions.

The argument, then, by which ecclesiastical establishments are defended, proceeds by these steps:—The knowledge and profession of Christianity, cannot be upholden without a clergy: a clergy cannot be supported without a legal provision; a legal provision for the clergy, cannot be constituted without the preference of one sect of Christians to the rest: and the conclusion will be conveniently satisfactory in the degree in which the truth of these several propositions can be made out.

If it be deemed expedient to establish a national religion, that is to say, one sect in preference to all others; some *test*, by which the teachers of that sect may be distinguished from the teachers of different sects, appears to be an indispensable consequence. The existence of such an establishment supposes it: the very notion of a national religion includes that of a test.

But this necessity, which is real, hath, according to the fashion of human affairs, furnished to almost every church a pretence for extending, multiplying, and continuing, such tests beyond what the occasion justified. For though some purposes of order and tranquillity may be answered by the establishment of creeds and confessions, yet they are at all times attended with serious inconveniencies: they check inquiry; they violate liberty; they ensnare the consciences of the clergy, by holding out temptations to prevarication; however they may express the persuasion, or be accommodated to the controversies or to the fears of the age in which they are composed, in process of time, and by reason of the changes which are wont to take place in the judgment of mankind upon religious subjects, they come at length to contradict the actual opinions of the church, whose doctrines they profess to contain; and they often perpetuate the proscription of sects, and tenets, from which any danger has long ceased to be apprehended.

It may not follow from these objections, that tests and subscriptions ought to be abolished: but it follows, that they ought to be made as simple and easy as possible; that they should be adapted, from time to time, to the varying sentiments and circumstances of the church in which they are received; and that they should at no time advance one step farther than some subsisting necessity requires. If, for instance, promises of conformity to the rites, liturgy, and offices of the church, be sufficient to prevent confusion and disorder in the celebration of divine worship, then such promises ought to be accepted in the place of stricter subscriptions. If articles of *peace*, as they are called, that is, engagements not to preach certain doctrines, nor to revive certain controversies, would exclude indecent altercations amongst the national clergy, as well as secure to the public teaching of religion, as much of uniformity and quiet as is necessary to edification: then confessions of *faith* ought to be converted into articles of peace. In a word, it ought to be holden a sufficient reason for relaxing the terms of subscription, or for dropping any or all of the articles to be subscribed, that no *present* necessity requires the strictness which is complained of, or that it should be extended to so many points of doctrine.

The division of the country into districts, and the stationing in each district a teacher of religion, forms the substantial part of every church establishment. The varieties that have been introduced into the government and discipline of different churches, are of inferior importance when compared with this, in which they all agree. Of these economical questions, none seems more material than that which has been long agitated in the reformed churches of Christendom, whether a parity amongst the clergy, or a distinction of orders in the ministry, be more conducive to the general ends of the institution. In favour of that system which the laws of this country have preferred, we may allege the following reasons:—that it secures tranquillity and subordination amongst the clergy themselves; that it corresponds with the gradations of rank in civil life, and provides for the edification of each rank, by stationing in each an order of clergy of their own class and quality; and, lastly, that the same fund produces more effect, both as an allurement to men of talents to enter into the church, and as a stimulus to the industry of those who are already in it, when distributed into prizes of different value, than when divided into equal shares.

After the state has once established a particular system of faith as a national religion, a question will soon occur, concerning the treatment and toleration of those who *dissent* from it. This question is properly preceded by another, concerning the right which the civil magistrate possesses to interfere in matters of religion at all: for, although this right be acknowledged whilst he is employed solely in providing means of public instruction, it will probably be disputed, (indeed it ever has been,) when he proceeds to inflict penalties, to impose restraints or incapacities, on the account of religious distinctions. They who admit no other just original of civil government, than what is founded in some stipulation with its subjects, are at liberty to contend that the concerns of religion were excepted out of the social compact; that, in an affair which can only be transacted between God and a man's own conscience, no commission or authority was ever delegated to the civil magistrate, or could indeed be transferred from the person himself to any other. We, however, who have rejected this theory, because we cannot discover any actual contract between the state and the people, and because we cannot allow any arbitrary fiction to be made the foundation of real rights and of real obligations, find ourselves precluded from this distinction. The reasoning which deduces the authority of civil government from the will of God, and which collects that will from public expediency alone, binds us to the unreserved conclusion, that the jurisdiction of the magistrate is limited by no consideration but that of general utility: in plainer terms, that whatever be the subject to be regulated, it is lawful for him to interfere whenever his inteference, in its general tendency, appears to be conducive to the common interest. There is nothing in the nature of religion, as such, which exempts it from the authority of the legislator, when the safety or welfare of the community requires his interposition. It has been said, indeed, that religion, pertaining to the interests of a life to come, lies beyond the province of civil government, the office of which is confined to the affairs of this life. But in reply to this objection, it may be observed, that when the laws interfere even in religion, they interfere only with temporals; their effects terminate, their power operates only upon those rights and interests, which confessedly belong to their disposal. The acts of the legislature, the edicts of the prince, the sentence of the judge, cannot affect my salvation: nor do they, without the most absurd arrogance, pretend to any such power: but they may deprive me of liberty, of property, and even of life itself, on account of my religion; and however I may complain of the injustice of the sentence by which I am condemned, I cannot allege, that the magistrate has transgressed the boundaries of his jurisdiction; because the property, the liberty, and the life of the subject, *may* be taken away by the authority of the laws, for any reason which, in the judgment of the legislature, renders such a measure necessary to the common welfare. Moreover, as the precepts of religion may regulate all the offices of life, or may be so construed as to extend to all, the exemption of religion from the control of human laws might afford a plea, which would exclude civil government from every authority over the conduct of its subjects. Religious liberty is, like civil liberty, not an immunity from restraint, but the being restrained by no law, but what in a greater degree conduces to the public welfare.

Still it is right "to obey God rather than man." Nothing that we have said encroaches upon the truth of this sacred and undisputed maxim: the right of the magistrate to ordain, and the obligation of the subject to obey, in matters of religion, may be very different; and will be so, as often as they flow from opposite apprehensions of the Divine will. In affairs that are properly of a civil nature, in "the things that are Cæsar's," this difference seldom happens. The law authorises the act which it enjoins; Revelation being either silent upon the subject, or referring to the laws of the country, or requiring only that men act by some fixed rule, and that this rule be established by competent authority. But when human laws interpose their direction in matters of religion, by dictating, for example, the object or the mode of divine worship; by prohibiting the profession of some articles of faith, and by exacting that of others, they are liable to clash with what private persons believe to be already settled by precepts of Revelation; or to contradict what God himself, they think, hath declared to be true. In this case, on whichever side the mistake lies, or whatever plea the state may allege to justify its edict, the subject can have none to excuse his compliance. The same consideration also points out the distinction, as to the authority of the state, between temporals and spirituals. The magistrate is not to be obeyed in temporals more than spirituals, where a repugnancy is perceived between his commands and any credited manifestations of the Divine will; but such repugnancies are much less likely to arise in one case than the other.

When we grant that it is lawful for the magistrate to interfere in religion as often as his interference appears to him to conduce, in its general tendency, to the public happiness; it may be argued, from this concession, that since salvation is the highest interest of mankind, and since, consequently, to advance *that*, is to promote the public happiness in the best way, and in the greatest degree, in which it can be promoted, it follows, that it is not only the right, but the duty, of every magistrate invested with supreme power, to enforce upon his subjects the reception of that religion which he deems most acceptable to God; and to enforce it by such methods as may appear most effectual for the end proposed. A popish king, for example, who should believe that salvation is not attainable out of the precincts of the Romish church, would derive a right from our principles (not to say that he would be bound by them) to employ the power with which the constitution intrusted him, and which power, in absolute monarchies, commands the lives and fortunes of every subject of the empire, in reducing his people within that communion. We confess that this consequence is inferred from the principles we have laid down concerning the foundation of civil authority, not without the resemblance of a regular deduction: we confess also that it is a conclusion which it behoves us to dispose of; because, if it really follow from our theory of government, the theory itself ought to be given up. Now it will be remembered, that the terms of our proposition are these:—"That it is lawful for the magistrate to interfere in the affairs of religion, whenever his interference appears to him to conduce, by its general tendency, to the public happiness." The clause of "general tendency," when

this rule comes to be applied, will be found a very significant part of the direction. It obliges the magistrate to reflect, not only whether the religion which he wishes to propagate amongst his subjects, be that which will best secure their eternal welfare; not only, whether the methods he employs be likely to effectuate the establishment of that religion; but also upon this farther question: Whether the kind of interference which he is about to exercise, if it were adopted as a common maxim amongst states and princes, or received as a general rule for the conduct of government in matters of religion, would, upon the whole, and in the mass of instances in which his example might be imitated, conduce to the furtherance of human salvation. If the magistrate, for example, should think that, although the application of his power might, in the instance concerning which he deliberates, advance the true religion, and together with it, the happiness of his people, yet that the same engine, in other hands, who might assume the right to use it with the like pretensions of reason and authority that he himself alleges, would more frequently shut out truth, and obstruct the means of salvation; he would be bound by this opinion, still admitting public utility to be the supreme rule of his conduct, to refrain from expedients, which, whatever particular effects *he* may expect from them, are, in their general operation, dangerous or hurtful. If there be any difficulty in the subject, it arises from that which is the cause of every difficulty in morals;—the competition of particular and general consequences; or, what is the same thing, the submission of one general rule to another rule which is still more general.

Bearing then in mind, that it is the *general* tendency of the measure, or, in other words, the effects which would arise from the measure being *generally* adopted, that fixes upon it the character of rectitude or injustice; we proceed to inquire what is the degree and the sort of interference of secular laws in matters of religion, which are likely to be beneficial to the public happiness. There are two maxims which will in a great measure regulate our conclusions upon this head. The first is, that any form of Christianity is better than no religion at all: the second, that, of different systems of faith, that is the best which is the truest. The first of these positions will hardly be disputed, when we reflect that every sect and modification of Christianity holds out the happiness and misery of another life, as depending chiefly upon the practice of virtue or of vice in this; and that the distinctions of virtue and vice are nearly the same in all. A person who acts under the impression of these hopes and fears, though combined with many errors and superstitions, is more likely to advance both the public happiness and his own, than one who is destitute of all expectation of future account. The latter proposition is founded in the consideration, that the principal importance of religion consists in its influence upon the fate and condition of a future existence. This influence belongs only to that religion which comes from God. A political religion may be framed, which shall embrace the purposes, and describe the duties of political society perfectly well; but if it be not delivered by God, what assurance does it afford, that the decisions of the Divine judgment will have any regard to the rules which it contains? By a man who acts with a view to a future judgment, the authority of a religion is the first thing inquired after; a religion which wants authority, with him wants every thing. Since then this authority appertains, not to the religion which is most commodious,—to the religion which is most sublime and efficacious,—to the religion which suits best with the form, or seems most calculated to uphold the power and stability, of civil government,—but only to that religion which comes from God; we are justified in pronouncing the *true* religion, by its very *truth*, and independently of all considerations of tendencies, aptness, or any other internal qualities whatever, to be universally the best.

From the first proposition follows this inference, that when the state enables its subjects to learn *some* form of Christianity, by distributing teachers of a religious system throughout the country, and by providing for the maintenance of these teachers at the public expense; that is, in fewer terms, when the laws *establish* a national religion, they exercise a power and an interference, which are likely, in their general tendency, to promote the interest of mankind; for, even supposing the species of Christianity which the laws patronise to be erroneous and corrupt, yet when the option lies between this religion and no religion at all, (which would be the consequence of leaving the people without any public means of instruction, or any regular celebration of the offices of Christianity,) our proposition teaches us that the former alternative is constantly to be preferred.

But after the right of the magistrate to establish a particular religion has been, upon this principal, admitted; a doubt sometimes presents itself, whether the religion which he ought to establish, be that which he himself professes, or that which he observes to prevail amongst the majority of the people. Now when we consider this question with a view to the formation of a general rule upon the subject, (which view alone can furnish a just solution of the doubt,) it must be assumed to be an equal chance whether of the two religions contain more of truth,—that of the magistrate, or that of the people. The chance then that is left to truth being equal upon both suppositions, the remaining consideration will be, from which arrangement more efficacy can be expected;—from an order of men appointed to teach the people their own religion, or to convert them to another? In my opinion, the advantage lies on the side of the former scheme; and this opinion, if it be assented to, makes it the duty of the magistrate, in the choice of the religion which he establishes, to consult the faith of the nation, rather than his own.

The case also of dissenters must be determined by the principles just now stated. *Toleration* is of two kinds;—the allowing to dissenters the unmolested profession and exercise of their religion, but with an exclusion from offices of trust and emolument in the state; which is a *partial* toleration: and the admitting them, without distinction, to all the civil privileges and capacities of other citizens; which is a *complete* toleration. The expediency of toleration, and consequently the right of every citizen to demand it, as far as relates to liberty of conscience, and the claim of being protected in the free and safe profession of his religion, is deducible from the *second* of those propositions which we have delivered as the grounds of our conclusions upon the subject. That proposi-

tion asserts truth, and truth in the abstract to be the supreme perfection of every religion. The advancement, consequently, and discovery of truth, is that end to which all regulations concerning religion ought principally to be adapted. Now, every species of intolerance which enjoins suppression and silence, and every species of persecution which enforces such injunctions, is adverse to the progress of truth; forasmuch as it causes that to be fixed by one set of men, at one time, which is much better and with much more probability of success, left to the independent and progressive inquiry of separate individuals. Truth results from discussion and controversy, and is investigated by the labours and researches of private persons. Whatever, therefore, prohibits these, obstructs that industry and that liberty, which it is the common interest of mankind to promote. In religion, as in other subjects, truth, if left to itself, will almost always obtain the ascendency. If different religions be professed in the same country, and the minds of men remain unfettered and unawed by intimidations of law, that religion which is founded in maxims of reason and credibility, will gradually gain over the other to it. I do not mean that men will formally renounce their ancient religion, but that they will adopt into it the more rational doctrines, the improvements and discoveries of the neighbouring sect; by which means the worse religion, without the ceremony of a reformation, will insensibly assimilate itself to the better. If popery, for instance, and protestantism, were permitted to dwell quietly together, papists might not become protestants (for the name is commonly the last thing that is changed,*) but they would become more enlightened and informed; they would by little and little incorporate into their creed many of the tenets of protestantism, as well as imbibe a portion of its spirit and moderation.

The justice and expediency of toleration we found primarily in its conduciveness to truth, and in the superior value of truth to that of any other quality which a religion can possess: this is the principal argument; but there are some auxiliary considerations, too important to be omitted. The confining of the subject to the religion of the state, is a needless violation of natural liberty, and is an instance in which constraint is always grievous. Persecution produces no sincere conviction, nor any real change of opinion; on the contrary, it vitiates the public morals, by driving men to prevarication; and commonly ends in a general though secret infidelity, by imposing, under the name of revealed religion, systems of doctrine which men cannot believe, and dare not examine: finally, it disgraces the character, and wounds the reputation of Christianity itself, by making it the author of oppression, cruelty, and bloodshed.

Under the idea of religious toleration, I include the toleration of all books of serious argumentation: but I deem it no infringement of religious liberty, to restrain the circulation of ridicule, invective, and mockery, upon religious subjects; because this species of writing applies solely to the passions, weakens the judgment, and contaminates the imagination, of its readers; has no tendency whatever to assist either the investigation or the impression of truth: on the contrary, whilst it stays not to distinguish between the authority of different religions, it destroys alike the influence of all.

Concerning the admission of dissenters from the established religion to offices and employments in the public service, (which is necessary, to render toleration *complete*,) doubts have been entertained, with some appearance of reason. It is possible that such religious opinions may be holden, as are utterly incompatible with the necessary functions of civil government; and which opinions consequently disqualify those who maintain them from exercising any share in its administration. There have been enthusiasts who held that Christianity has abolished all distinction of property, and that she enjoins upon her followers a community of goods. With what tolerable propriety could one of this sect be appointed a judge or a magistrate, whose office it is to decide upon questions of private right, and to protect men in the exclusive enjoyment of their property? It would be equally absurd to intrust a military command to a Quaker, who believes it to be contrary to the Gospel to take up arms. This is possible; therefore it cannot be laid down as an universal truth, that religion is not, in its nature, a cause which will justify exclusion from public employments. When we examine, however, the sects of Christianity which actually prevail in the world, we must confess that, with the single exception of refusing to bear arms, we find no tenet in any of them which incapacitates men for the service of the state. It has indeed been asserted, that discordancy of religions, even supposing each religion to be free from any errors that affect the safety or the conduct of government, is enough to render men unfit to act together, in public stations. But upon what argument, or upon what experience, is this assertion founded? I perceive no reason why men of different religious persuasions may not sit upon the same bench, deliberate in the same council, or fight in the same ranks, as well as men of various or opposite opinions upon any controverted topic of natural philosophy, history, or ethics.

There are two cases in which test-laws are wont to be applied, and in which, if in any, they may be defended. One is, where two or more religions are contending for establishment; and where there appears no way of putting an end to the contest, but by giving to one religion such a decided superiority in the legislature and government of the country, as to secure it against danger from any other. I own that I should assent to this precaution with many scruples. If the dissenters from the establishment become a majority of the people; the establishment itself ought to be altered or qualified. If there exists amongst the different sects of the country such a parity of numbers, interest, and power, as to render the preference of one sect to the rest, and the choice of that sect, a matter of hazardous success, and of doubtful election, some plan similar to that which is meditated in North America, and which we have described in a preceding part of the present chapter, though encumbered with great difficulties, may perhaps suit better with this divided state of public opinion, than any constitution of a national church whatever. In all other situations, the establishment will be strong enough to maintain itself. However, if a test be applicable with justice

* Would we let the *name* stand, we might often attract men, without their perceiving it, much nearer to ourselves, than, if they did perceive it, they would be willing to come.

upon this principle at all, it ought to be applied in regal governments, to the chief magistrate himself, whose power might otherwise overthrow or change the established religion of the country, in opposition to the will and sentiments of the people.

The second case of *exclusion*, and in which, I think, the measure is more easily vindicated, is that of a country in which some disaffection to the subsisting government happens to be connected with certain religious distinctions. The state undoubtedly has a right to refuse its power and its confidence to those who seek its destruction. Wherefore, if the generality of any religious sect entertain dispositions hostile to the constitution, and if government have no other way of knowing its enemies than by the religion which they profess, the professors of that religion may justly be excluded from offices of trust and authority. But even *here* it should be observed, that it is not against the religion that government shuts its doors, but against those political principles, which, however independent they may be of any article of religious faith, the members of that communion are found in fact to hold. Nor would the legislator make religious tenets the test of men's inclinations towards the state, if he could discover any other that was equally certain and notorious. Thus, if the members of the Romish church, for the most part adhere to the interests, or maintain the right, of a foreign pretender to the crown of these kingdoms; and if there be no way of distinguishing those who do from those who do not retain such dangerous prejudices; government is well warranted in fencing out the whole sect from situations of trust and power. But even in this example, it is not to popery that the laws object, but to popery as the mark of jacobitism; an equivocal indeed and fallacious mark, but the best and perhaps the only one, that can be devised. But then it should be remembered, that as the connexion between popery and jacobitism, which is the sole cause of suspicion and the sole justification of those severe and jealous laws which have been enacted against the professors of that religion, was accidental in its origin, so probably it will be temporary in its duration; and that these restrictions ought not to continue one day longer than some visible danger renders them necessary to the preservation of public tranquillity.

After all, it may be asked; Why should not the legislator direct his test against the political principles themselves which he wishes to exclude, rather than encounter them through the medium of religious tenets, the only crime and the only danger of which consist in their presumed alliance with the former? Why, for example, should a man be required to renounce transubstantiation, before he be admitted to an office in the state, when it might seem to be sufficient that he abjure the pretender? There are but two answers that can be given to the objection which this question contains: first, that it is not opinions which the laws fear, so much as inclinations; and, that political inclinations are not so easily detected by the affirmation or denial of any abstract proposition in politics, as by the discovery of the religious creed with which they are wont to be united:—secondly, that when men renounce their religion, they commonly quit all connexion with the members of the church which they have left; that church no longer expecting assistance or friendship from them: whereas particular persons might insinuate themselves into offices of trust and authority, by subscribing political assertions, and yet retain their predilection for the interests of the religious sect to which they continued to belong. By which means, government would sometimes find, though it could not accuse the individual, whom it had received into its service, of disaffection to the civil establishment, yet that, through him, it had communicated the aid and influence of a powerful station to a party who were hostile to the constitution. These answers, however, we propose rather than defend. The measure certainly cannot be defended at all, except where the suspected union between certain obnoxious principles in politics, and certain tenets in religion, is nearly universal; in which case, it makes little difference to the subscriber, whether the test be religious or political; and the state is somewhat better secured by the one than the other.

The result of our examination of those general tendencies, by which every interference of civil government in matters of religion ought to be tried, is this: "That a comprehensive national religion, guarded by a few articles of peace and conformity, together with a legal provision for the clergy of that religion; and with a *complete* toleration of all dissenters from the established church, without any other limitation or exception, than what arises from the conjunction of dangerous political dispositions with certain religious tenets; appears to be, not only the most just and liberal, but the wisest and safest system, which a state can adopt; inasmuch as it unites the several perfections which a religious constitution ought to aim at:—liberty of conscience, with means of instruction; the progress of truth, with the peace of society; the right of private judgment, with the care of the public safety."

CHAPTER XI.

Of Population and Provision; and of Agriculture and Commerce, as subservient thereto.

The final view of all rational politics is, to produce the greatest quantity of happiness in a given tract of country. The riches, strength, and glory of nations; the topics which history celebrates, and which alone almost engage the praises and possess the admiration of mankind; have no value farther than as they contribute to this end. When they interfere with it, they are evils, and not the less real for the splendour that surrounds them.

Secondly: Although we speak of communities as of sentient beings; although we ascribe to them happiness and misery, desires, interests, and passions; nothing really exists or feels but *individuals*. The happiness of a people is made up of the happiness of single persons; and the quantity of happiness can only be augmented by increasing the number of the percipients, or the pleasure of their perceptions.

Thirdly: Notwithstanding that diversity of condition, especially different degrees of plenty, freedom, and security, greatly vary the quantity of happiness enjoyed by the same number of individuals; and notwithstanding that extreme cases may be found, of human beings so galled by the rigours of slavery, that the increase of numbers is only the amplification of misery; yet, within certain limits, and within those limits

to which civil life is diversified under the temperate governments that obtain in Europe, it may be affirmed, I think, with certainty, that the quantity of happiness produced in any given district, *so far* depends upon the number of inhabitants, that, in comparing adjoining periods in the same country, the collective happiness will be nearly in the exact proportion of the numbers; that is, twice the number of inhabitants will produce double the quantity of happiness: in distant periods, and different countries, under great changes or great dissimilitude of civil condition, although the proportion of enjoyment may fall much short of the numbers, yet still any considerable excess of numbers will usually carry with it a preponderation of happiness; that, at least, it may and ought to be assumed, in all political deliberations, that a larger portion of happiness is enjoyed amongst *ten* persons, possessing the means of healthy subsistence, than can be produced by *five* persons, under every advantage of power, affluence, and luxury.

From these principles it follows, that the quantity of happiness in a given district, although it is possible it may be increased, the number of inhabitants remaining the same, is chiefly and most naturally affected by alteration of the numbers: that, consequently, the decay of population is the greatest evil that a state can suffer; and the improvement of it, the object which ought, in all countries, to be aimed at, in preference to every other political purpose whatsoever.

The importance of population, and the superiority of *it* to every other national advantage, are points necessary to be inculcated, and to be understood; inasmuch as false estimates, or fantastic notions, of national grandeur, are perpetually drawing the attention of statesmen and legislators from the care of this, which is, at all times, the true and absolute interest of a country: for which reason, we have stated these points with unusual formality. We will confess, however, that a competition can seldom arise between the advancement of population and any measure of sober utility; because, in the ordinary progress of human affairs, whatever, in any way, contributes to make a people happier, tends to render them more numerous.

In the fecundity of the human, as of every other species of animals, nature has provided for an indefinite multiplication. Mankind have increased to their present number from a single pair; the offspring of early marriages, in the ordinary course of procreation, do more than replace the parents: in countries, and under circumstances very favourable to subsistence, the population has been doubled in the space of twenty years; the havoc occasioned by wars, earthquakes, famine, or pestilence, is usually repaired in a short time.—These indications sufficiently demonstrate the tendency of nature, in the human species, to a continual increase of its numbers. It becomes, therefore, a question that may reasonably be propounded, what are the causes which confine or check the natural progress of this multiplication? And the answer which first presents itself to the thoughts of the inquirer is, that the population of a country must stop when the country can maintain no more; that is, when the inhabitants are already so numerous as to exhaust all the provision which the soil can be made to produce. This, however, though an insuperable bar, will seldom be found to be *that* which actually checks the progress of population in any country of the world; because the number of the people have seldom, in any country, arrived at this limit, or even approached to it. The fertility of the ground, in temperate regions, is capable of being improved by cultivation to an extent which is unknown; much, however, beyond the state of improvement in any country in Europe. In our own, which holds almost the first place in the knowledge and encouragement of agriculture, let it only be supposed that every field in England, of the same original quality with those in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, and consequently capable of the same fertility, were, by a like management, made to yield an equal produce; and it may be asserted, I believe with truth, that the quantity of human provision raised in the island would be increased five-fold. The two principles, therefore, upon which population seems primarily to depend, the fecundity of the species, and the capacity of the soil, would in most, perhaps in all countries, enable it to proceed much farther than it has yet advanced. The number of marriageable women, who, in each country, remain unmarried, afford a computation how much the agency of nature in the diffusion of human life is cramped and contracted; and the quantity of waste, neglected, or mismanaged surface,—together with a comparison, like the preceding, of the crops raised from the soil in the neighbourhood of populous cities, and under a perfect state of cultivation, with those which lands of equal or superior quality yield in different situations,—will show in what proportion the indigenous productions of the earth are capable of being farther augmented.

The fundamental proposition upon the subject of *population*, which must guide every endeavour to improve it, and from which every conclusion concerning it may be deduced, is this: "Wherever the commerce between the sexes is regulated by marriage, and a provision for that mode of subsistence, to which each class of the community is accustomed, can be procured with ease and certainty, there the number of the people will increase; and the rapidity, as well as the extent, of the increase, will be proportioned to the degree in which these causes exist."

This proposition we will draw out into the several principles which it contains.

I. First, the proposition asserts the "necessity of confining the intercourse of the sexes to the marriage-union." It is only in the marriage-union that this intercourse is sufficiently prolific. Beside which, family establishments alone are fitted to perpetuate a succession of generations. The offspring of a vague and promiscuous concubinage are not only few, and liable to perish by neglect, but are seldom prepared for, or introduced into situations suited to the raising of families of their own. Hence the advantages of marriages. Now nature, in the constitution of the sexes, has provided a stimulus which will infallibly secure the frequency of marriages, with all their beneficial effects upon the state of population, provided the male part of the species be prohibited from irregular gratifications. This impulse, which is sufficient to surmount almost every impediment to marriage, will operate in proportion to the difficulty, expense, danger, or infamy, the sense of guilt, or the fear of punishment, which attend licentious indulgences. Wherefore, in countries in

which subsistence is become scarce, it behoves the state to watch over the public morals with increased solicitude; for nothing but the instinct of nature, under the restraint of chastity, will induce men to undertake the labour, or consent to the sacrifice of personal liberty and indulgence, which the support of a family, in such circumstances, requires.

II. The second requisite which our proposition states as necessary to the success of population, is, "the ease and certainty with which a provision can be procured for that mode of subsistence to which each class of the community is accustomed." It is not enough that men's *natural* wants be supplied; that a provision adequate to the real exigencies of human life be attainable: habitual superfluities become actual wants; opinion and fashion convert articles of ornament and luxury into necessaries of life. And it must not be expected from men in general, at least in the present relaxed state of morals and discipline, that they will enter into marriages which degrade their condition, reduce their mode of living, deprive them of the accommodations to which they have been accustomed, or even of those ornaments or appendages of rank and station which they have been taught to regard as belonging to their birth, or class, or profession, or place in society. The same consideration, namely, a view to their *accustomed* mode of life, which is so apparent in the superior order of the people, has no less influence upon those ranks which compose the mass of the community. The kind and quality of food and liquor, the species of habitation, furniture, and clothing, to which the common people of each country are habituated, must be attainable with ease and certainty, before marriages will be sufficiently early and general to carry the progress of population to its just extent. It is in vain to allege, that a more simple diet, ruder habitations, or coarser apparel, would be sufficient for the purposes of life and health, or even of physical ease and pleasure. Men will not marry with this encouragement. For instance: when the common people of a country are accustomed to eat a large proportion of animal food, to drink wine, spirits, or beer, to wear shoes and stockings, to dwell in stone houses, they will not marry to live in clay cottages, upon roots and milk, with no other clothing than skins, or what is necessary to defend the trunk of the body from the effects of cold; although these last may be all that the sustentation of life and health requires, or that even contribute much to animal comfort and enjoyment.

The ease, then, and certainty, with which the means can be procured, not barely of subsistence, but of that mode of subsisting which custom hath in each country established, form the point upon which the state and progress of population chiefly depend. Now, there are three causes which evidently regulate this point: the mode itself of subsisting which prevails in the country; the quantity of provision suited to that mode of subsistence, which is either raised in the country or imported into it; and, lastly, the distribution of that provision.

These three causes merit distinct consideration.

I. The mode of living which actually obtains in a country. In China, where the inhabitants frequent the sea shore, or the banks of large rivers, and subsist in a great measure upon fish, the population is described to be excessive. This peculiarity arises, not probably from any civil advantages, any care or policy, any particular constitution or superior wisdom of government; but simply from hence, that the species of food to which custom hath reconciled the desires and inclinations of the inhabitants, is that which, of all others, is procured in the greatest abundance, with the most ease, and stands in need of the least preparation. The natives of Indostan being confined, by the laws of their religion, to the use of vegetable food, and requiring little except rice, which the country produces in plentiful crops; and food, in warm climates, composing the only want of life; these countries are populous, under all the injuries of a despotic, and the agitations of an unsettled government. If any revolution, or what would be called perhaps refinement of manners, should generate in these people a taste for the flesh of animals, similar to what prevails amongst the Arabian hordes; should introduce flocks and herds into grounds which are now covered with corn; should teach them to account a certain portion of this species of food amongst the necessaries of life; the population, from this single change, would suffer in a few years a great diminution: and this diminution would follow, in spite of every effort of the laws, or even of any improvement that might take place in their civil condition. In Ireland, the simplicity of living alone, maintains a considerable degree of population, under great defects of police, industry, and commerce.

Under this head, and from a view of these considerations, may be understood the true evil and proper danger of *luxury*.

Luxury, as it supplies employment and promotes industry, assists population. But, then there is another consequence attending it, which counteracts and often overbalances these advantages. When, by introducing more superfluities into general reception, luxury has rendered the usual accommodations of life more expensive, artificial, and elaborate, the difficulty of maintaining a family conformably with the established mode of living, becomes greater, and what each man has to spare from his personal consumption proportionably less: the effect of which is, that marriages grow less frequent, agreeably to the maxim above laid down, and which must be remembered as the foundation of all our reasoning upon the subject, that men will not marry to *sink* their place or condition in society, or to forego those indulgences which their own habits, or what they observe amongst their equals, have rendered necessary to their satisfaction. This principle is applicable to every article of diet and dress, to houses, furniture, attendance; and this effect will be felt in every class of the community. For instance: the custom of wearing broad-cloth and fine linen, repays the shepherd and flax-grower, feeds the manufacturer, enriches the merchant, gives not only support but existence to multitudes of families: hitherto, therefore, the effects are beneficial; and were these the only effects, such elegancies, or, if you please to call them so, such luxuries, could not be too universal. But here follows the mischief: when once fashion hath annexed the use of these articles of dress to any certain class, the middling ranks, for example, of the community, each individual of that rank finds them to be *necessaries* of life, that is, finds himself obliged to comply with the example of his equals,

and to maintain that appearance which the custom of society requires. This obligation creates such a demand upon his income, and adds so much to the cost and burden of a family, as to put it out of his power to marry, with the prospect of continuing his habits, or of maintaining his place and situation in the world. We see, in this description, the cause which induces men to waste their lives in a barren celibacy; and this cause, which impairs the very source of population, is justly placed to the account of luxury.

It appears, then, that *luxury*, considered with a view to population, acts by two opposite effects; and it seems probable that there exists a point in the scale, to which luxury may ascend, or to which the wants of mankind may be multiplied with advantage to the community, and beyond which the prejudicial consequences begin to preponderate. The determination of this point, though it assume the form of an arithmetical problem, depends upon circumstances too numerous, intricate, and undefined, to admit of a precise solution. However, from what has been observed concerning the tendency of luxury to diminish marriages, in which tendency the evil of it resides, the following general conclusions may be established:—

1st, That, of different kinds of luxury, those are the most innocent which afford employment to the greatest number of artists and manufacturers; or those, in other words, in which the price of the work bears the greatest proportion to that of the raw material.—Thus, luxury in dress or furniture, is universally preferable to luxury in eating, because the articles which constitute the one, are more the production of human art and industry, than those which supply the other.

2dly, That it is the *diffusion*, rather than the *degree* of luxury, which is to be dreaded as a national evil. The mischief of luxury consists, as we have seen, in the obstruction which it forms to marriage. Now it is only a small part of the people that the higher ranks in any country compose; for which reason, the facility or the difficulty of supporting the expense of *their* station, and the consequent increase or diminution of marriages among *them*, will influence the state of population but little. So long as the prevalency of luxury is confined to a few of elevated rank, much of the benefit is felt, and little of the inconveniency. But when the imitation of the same manner descends, as it always will do, into the mass of the people; when it advances the requisites of living, beyond what it adds to men's abilities to purchase them; then it is that luxury checks the formation of families, in a degree that ought to alarm the public fears.

3dly, That the condition most favourable to population is that of a laborious, frugal people, ministering to the demands of an opulent, luxurious nation; because this situation, whilst it leaves them every advantage of luxury, exempts them from the evils which naturally accompany its admission into any country.

II. Next to the mode of living, we are to consider "the quantity of provision suited to that mode, which is either raised in the country, or imported into it:" for this is the order in which we assigned the causes of population, and undertook to treat of them. Now, if we measure the quantity of provision by the number of human bodies it will support in due health and vigour, this quantity, the extent and quality of the soil from which it is raised being given, will depend greatly upon the *kind*. For instance: a piece of ground capable of supplying animal food sufficient for the subsistence of ten persons, would sustain, at least, the double of that number with grain, roots, and milk. The first resource of savage life is in the flesh of wild animals; hence the numbers amongst savage nations, compared with the tract of country which they occupy, are universally small; because this species of provision is, of all others, supplied in the slenderest proportion. The next step was the invention of pasturage, or the rearing of flocks and herds of tame animals: this alteration added to the stock of provision much. But the last and principal improvement was to follow; namely, tillage, or the artificial production of corn, esculent plants, and roots. This discovery, whilst it changed the quality of human food, augmented the quantity in a vast proportion. So far as the state of population is governed and limited by the quantity of provision, perhaps there is no single cause that affects it so powerfully, as the kind and quality of food which chance or usage hath introduced into a country. In England, notwithstanding the produce of the soil has been, of late, considerably increased, by the enclosure of wastes, and the adoption, in many places, of a more successful husbandry, yet we do not observe a corresponding addition to the number of inhabitants; the reason of which appears to me to be, the more general consumption of animal food amongst us. Many ranks of people whose ordinary diet was, in the last century, prepared almost entirely from milk, roots, and vegetables, now require every day a considerable portion of the flesh of animals. Hence a great part of the richest lands of the country are converted to pasturage. Much also of the bread-corn, which went directly to the nourishment of human bodies, now only contributes to it by fattening the flesh of sheep and oxen. The mass and volume of provisions are hereby diminished; and what is gained in the melioration of the soil, is lost in the quality of the produce. This consideration teaches us, that tillage, as an object of national care and encouragement, is universally preferable to pasturage, because the kind of provision which it yields, goes much farther in the sustentation of human life. Tillage is also recommended by this additional advantage, that it affords employment to a much more numerous peasantry. Indeed, pasturage seems to be the art of a nation, either imperfectly civilized, as are many of the tribes which cultivate it in the internal parts of Asia; or of a nation, like Spain, declining from its summit by luxury and inactivity.

The kind and quality of provision, together with the extent and capacity of the soil from which it is raised, being the same; the quantity procured will principally depend upon two circumstances,—the *ability* of the occupier, and the *encouragement* which he receives. The greatest misfortune of a country is an indigent tenantry. Whatever be the native advantages of the soil, or even the skill and industry of the occupier, the want of a sufficient capital confines every plan, as well as cripples and weakens every operation of husbandry. This evil is felt, where agriculture is accounted a servile or mean employment; where farms are extremely subdivided and badly furnished with habitations; where leases are unknown, or are of short or precarious duration.

With respect to the *encouragement* of husbandry; in this, as in every other employment, the true reward of industry is in the price and sale of the produce.—The exclusive right to the produce, is the only incitement which acts constantly and universally; the only spring which keeps human labour in motion. All therefore that the laws can do, is to secure this right to the occupier of the ground; that is, to constitute such a system of tenure, that the full and entire advantage of every improvement go to the benefit of the improver; that every man work for himself, and not for another; and that no one share in the profit who does not assist in the production. By the *occupier* I here mean, not so much the person who performs the work, as him who procures the labour and directs the management: and I consider the whole profit as *received* by the occupier, when the occupier is benefited by the whole value of what is produced, which is the case with the tenant who pays a fixed rent for the use of land, no less than with the proprietor who holds it as his own. The one has the same interest in the produce, and in the advantage of every improvement, as the other. Likewise the proprietor, though he grant out his estate to farm, may be considered as the *occupier*, insomuch as he regulates the occupation by the choice, superintendency, and encouragement, of his tenants, by the disposition of his lands, by erecting buildings, providing accommodations, by prescribing conditions, or supplying implements and materials of improvement; and is entitled, by the rule of public expediency above mentioned, to receive, in the advance of his rent, a share of the benefit which arises from the increased produce of his estate. The violation of this fundamental maxim of agrarian policy constitutes the chief objection to the holding of lands by the state, by the king, by corporate bodies, by private persons in right of their offices or benefices. The inconveniency to the public arises not so much from the unalienable quality of lands thus holden in perpetuity, as from hence; that proprietors of this description seldom contribute much either of attention or expense to the cultivation of their estates, yet claim, by the rent, a share in the profit of every improvement that is made upon them. This complaint can only be obviated by "long leases at a fixed rent," which convey a large portion of the interest to those who actually conduct the cultivation. The same objection is applicable to the holding of lands by foreign proprietors, and in some degree to estates of too great extent being placed in the same hands.

III. Beside the *production* of provision, there remains to be considered the DISTRIBUTION.—It is in vain that provisions abound in the country, unless I be able to obtain a share of them. This effection belongs to every individual. The plenty of provision produced, the quantity of the public stock affords subsistence to individuals, and encouragement to the formation of families, only in proportion as it is *distributed*, that is, in proportion as these individuals are allowed to draw from a supply of their own wants. The *distribution*, therefore, becomes of equal consequence to population with the *production*.—Now there is but one principle of distribution that can ever become universal, namely, the principle of "exchange;" or, in other words, that every man have something to give in return for what he wants. Bounty, however it may come in aid of another principle, however it may occasionally qualify the rigour, or supply the imperfection, of an established rule of distribution, can never itself become that rule or principle; because men will not work to give the produce of their labour away.—Moreover, the only equivalents that can be offered in exchange for provision are *power* and *labour*. All property is *power*. What we call property in land, is the power to use it, and to exclude others from the use. Money is the representative of *power*, because it is convertible into power: the value of it consists in its faculty of procuring *power* over things and persons. But *power* which results from civil conventions (and of this kind is what we call a man's fortune or estate,) is necessarily confined to a few, and is withal soon exhausted: whereas the capacity of *labour* is every man's natural possession, and composes a constant and renewing fund. The hire, therefore, or produce of personal industry, is that which the bulk of every community must bring to market, in exchange for the means of subsistence; in other words, employment must, in every country, be the medium of distribution, and the source of supply to individuals. But when we consider the *production* and *distribution* of provision, as distinct from, and independent of, each other; when, supposing the same quantity to be produced, we inquire in what way, or according to what rule, it may be *distributed*; we are led to a conception of the subject not at all agreeable to truth and reality; for, in truth and reality, though provision must be produced before it be distributed, yet the production depends, in a great measure, upon the distribution. The quantity of provision raised out of the ground, so far as the raising of it requires human art or labour, will evidently be regulated by the demand: the demand, or, in other words, the price and sale, being that which alone rewards the care, or excites the diligence, of the husbandman. But the sale of provision depends upon the number, not of those who want, but of those who have something to offer in return for what they want; not of those who would consume, but of those who can buy; that is, upon the number of those who have the fruits of some other kind of industry to tender in exchange for what they stand in need of from the production of the soil.

We see, therefore, the connection between population and *employment*. Employment affects population "directly," as it affords the only medium of distribution by which individuals can obtain from the common stock a supply for the wants of their families: it affects population, "indirectly," as it augments the stock itself of provision, in the only way by which the production of it can be effectually encouraged,—by furnishing purchasers. No man can purchase without an equivalent; and that equivalent, by the generality of the people, must in every country be derived from employment. And upon this basis is founded the public benefit of *trade*, that is to say, its subserviency to population, in which its only real utility consists. Of that industry, and of those arts and branches of trade, which are employed in the production, conveyance, and preparation, of any principal species of human food, as of the business of the husbandman, the butcher, baker, brewer, corn merchant, &c. we acknowledge the necessity: likewise of those manufactures which

furnish us with warm clothing, convenient habitations, domestic utensils, as of the weaver, tailor, smith, carpenter, &c. we perceive (in climates, however, like ours, removed at a distance from the sun,) the conduciveness to population, by their rendering human life more healthy, vigorous, and comfortable. But not one half the occupations which compose the trade of Europe, fall within either of these descriptions. Perhaps two-thirds of the manufacturers in England are employed upon articles of confessed luxury, ornament, or splendour; in the superfluous embellishment of some articles which are useful in their kind, or upon others which have no conceivable use or value but what is founded in caprice or fashion. What can be less necessary or less connected with the sustentation of human life, than the whole produce of the silk, lace, and plate manufactory? yet what multitudes labour in the different branches of these arts! What can be imagined more capricious than the fondness for tobacco and snuff? yet how many various occupations, and how many thousands in each, are set at work in administering to this frivolous gratification! Concerning trades of this kind, (and this kind comprehends more than half the trades that are exercised,) it may fairly be asked, "How, since they add nothing to the stock of provision, do they tend to increase the number of the people?" We are taught to say of trade, "that it maintains multitudes;" but by what means does it *maintain* them, when it produces nothing upon which the support of human life depends?—In like manner with respect to foreign commerce; of that merchandise which brings the necessaries of life into a country, which imports, for example, corn, or cattle, or cloth, or fuel, we allow the tendency to advance population, because it increases the stock of provision by which the people are subsisted. But this effect of foreign commerce is so little seen in our own country, that I believe, it may be affirmed of Great Britain, what Bishop Berkley said of a neighbouring island, that, if it were encompassed with a wall of brass fifty cubits high, the country might maintain the same number of inhabitants that find subsistence in it at present; and that every necessary, and even every real comfort and accommodation of human life, might be supplied in as great abundance as they now are. Here, therefore, as before, we may fairly ask, by what operation it is, that foreign commerce, which brings into the country no one article of human subsistence, promotes the multiplication of human life?

The answer of this inquiry, will be contained in the discussion of another, viz:

Since the soil will maintain many more than it can employ, what must be done, supposing the country to be full, with the remainder of the inhabitants? They who, by the rules of partition, (and some such must be established in every country,) are entitled to the land; and they who, by their labour upon the soil, acquire a right in its produce, will not part with their property for nothing; or, rather, they will no longer raise from the soil what they can neither use themselves, nor exchange for what they want. Or, lastly, if these were willing to distribute what they could spare of the provision which the ground yielded, to others who had no share or concern in the property or cultivation of it, yet still the most enormous mischiefs would ensue, from great numbers remaining unemployed. The idleness of one half of the community would overwhelm the whole with confusion and disorder. One only way presents itself of removing the difficulty which this question states, and which is simply this: that they, whose work is not wanted, nor can be employed, in the raising of provision out of the ground, convert their hands and ingenuity to the fabrication of articles which may gratify and requite those who are so employed, or who by the division of lands in the country, are entitled to the exclusive possession of certain parts of them. By this contrivance, all things proceed well. The occupier of the ground raises from it the utmost that he can procure, because he is repaid for what he can spare by something else which he wants, or with which he is pleased: the artist or manufacturer, though he have neither any property in the soil, nor any concern in its cultivation, is regularly supplied with the produce, because he gives, in exchange for what he stands in need of, something upon which the receiver places an equal value: and the community is kept quiet, while both sides are engaged in their respective occupations.

It appears, then, that the business of one half of mankind is, to set the other half at work; that is, to provide articles which, by tempting the desires, may stimulate the industry, and call forth the activity, of those upon the exertion of whose industry, and the application of whose faculties, the production of human provision depends. A certain portion only of human labour is, or can be *productive;* the rest is *instrumental;*—both equally necessary, though the one have no other object than to excite the other. It appears also, that it signifies nothing, as to the main purpose of trade, how superfluous the articles which it furnishes are; whether the want of them be real or imaginary; whether it be founded in nature, or in opinion, in fashion, habit, or emulation: it is enough that they be actually desired and sought after. Flourishing cities are raised and supported by trading in tobacco; populous towns subsist by the manufactory of ribands. A watch may be a very unnecessary appendage to the dress of a peasant; yet if the peasant will till the ground in order to obtain a watch, the true design of trade is answered: and the watchmaker, while he polishes the case, or files the wheels of his machine, is contributing to the production of corn as effectually, though not so directly, as if he handled the spade or held the plough. The use of tobacco has been mentioned already, not only as an acknowledged superfluity, but as affording a remarkable example of the caprice of human appetite: yet if the fisherman will ply his nets, or the mariner fetch rice from foreign countries, in order to procure to himself this indulgence, the market is supplied with two important articles of provision, by the instrumentality of a merchandise which has no other apparent use than the gratification of a vitiated palate.

But it may come to pass that the husbandman, land-owner, or whoever he be that is entiled to the produce of the soil, will no longer exchange it for what the manufacturer has to offer. He is already supplied to the extent of his desires. For instance, he wants no more cloth; he will no longer therefore give the weaver corn in return for the produce of his looms: but he would readily give it for tea, or for wine. When the weaver

finds this to be the case, he has nothing to do but to send his cloth abroad, in exchange for tea or for wine, which he may barter for that provision which the offer of his cloth will no longer procure. The circulation is thus revived: and the benefit of the discovery is, that, whereas the number of weavers, who could find subsistence from their employment, was before limited by the consumption of cloth in the country, that number is now augmented, in proportion to the demand for tea and wine. This is the principle of *foreign* commerce. In the magnitude and complexity of the machine, the principle of motion is sometimes lost or unobserved; but it is always simple and the same, to whatever extent it may be diversified and enlarged in its operation.

The effect of trade upon agriculture, the process of which we have been endeavouring to describe, is visible in the neighbourhood of trading towns, and in those districts which carry on a communication with the markets of trading towns. The husbandmen are busy and skilful; the peasantry laborious; the land is managed to the best advantage; and double the quantity of corn or herbage (articles which are ultimately converted into human provision) raised from it, of what the same soil yields in remoter and more neglected parts of the country. Wherever a thriving manufactory finds means to establish itself, a new vegetation springs up around it. I believe it is true that agriculture never arrives at any considerable, much less at its highest, degree of perfection, where it is not connected with trade; that is, where the demand for the produce is not increased by the consumption of trading cities.

Let it be remembered then, that agriculture is the immediate source of human provision; that trade conduces to the production of provision only as it promotes agriculture; that the whole system of commerce, vast and various as it is, hath no other public importance than its subserviency to this end.

We return to the proposition we laid down, that "employment universally promotes population." From this proposition it follows, that the comparative utility of different branches of national commerce is measured by the number which each branch *employs*. Upon which principle a scale may easily be constructed, which shall assign to the several kinds and divisions of foreign trade, their respective degrees of public importance. In this scale, the *first* place belongs to the exchange of wrought goods for raw materials, as of broad cloth for raw silk; cutlery for wool; clocks or watches for iron, flax, or furs; because this traffic provides a market for the labour that has already been expended, at the same time that it supplies materials for new industry. Population always flourishes where this species of commerce obtains to any considerable degree. It is the cause of employment, or the certain indication. As it takes off the manufactures of the country, it promotes employment; as it brings in raw materials, it supposes the existence of manufactories in the country, and a demand for the article when manufactured. The *second* place is due to that commerce, which barters one species of wrought goods for another, as stuffs for calicoes, fustians for cambrics, leather for paper, or wrought goods for articles which require no farther preparation, as for wine, oil, tea, sugar, &c. This also assists employment; because, when the country is stocked with one kind of manufacture, it renews the demand by converting it into another: but it is inferior to the former, as it promotes this end by one side only of the bargain,—by what it carries out. —The *last*, the lowest, and most disadvantageous species of commerce, is the exportation of raw materials in return for wrought goods: as when wool is sent abroad to purchase velvets; hides or peltry, to procure shoes, hats, or linen cloth. This trade is unfavourable to population, because it leaves no room or demand for employment, either in what it takes out of the country, or in what it brings into it. Its operation on both sides is noxious. By its exports, it diminishes the very subject upon which the industry of the inhabitants ought to be exercised; by its imports, it lessens the encouragement of that industry, in the same proportion that it supplies the consumption of the country with the produce of foreign labour. Of different branches of *manufactory*, those are, in their nature, the most beneficial, in which the price of the wrought article exceeds in the highest proportion that of the raw material: for this excess measures the quantity of employment, or, in other words, the number of manufacturers, which each branch sustains. The produce of the ground is never the most advantageous article of foreign commerce. Under a perfect state of public economy, the soil of the country should be applied solely to the raising of provisions for the inhabitants, and its trade be supplied by their industry. A nation will never reach its proper extent of population, so long as its principal commerce consists in the exportation of corn or cattle, or even of wine, oil, tobacco, madder, indigo, timber; because these last articles take up that surface which ought to be covered with the materials of human subsistence.

It must be here however noticed, that we have all along considered the inhabitants of a country as maintained by the produce of the country; and that what we have said is applicable with strictness to this supposition alone. The reasoning, nevertheless, may easily be adapted to a different case: for when provision is not produced, but *imported*, what has been affirmed concerning provision, will be, in a great measure, true of that article, whether it be money, produce, or labour, which is exchanged for provision. Thus, when the Dutch raise madder, and exchange it for corn; or when the people of America plant tobacco, and send it to Europe for cloth; the cultivation of madder and tobacco becomes as necessary to the subsistence of the inhabitants, and by consequence will affect the state of population in these countries as sensibly, as the actual production of food, or the manufactory of raiment. In like manner, when the same inhabitants of Holland earn money by the carriage of the produce of one country to another, and with that money purchase the provision from abroad, which their own land is not extensive enough to supply, the increase or decline of this carrying trade will influence the numbers of the people no less than similar changes would do in the cultivation of the soil.

The few principles already established, will enable us to describe the effects upon population which may be expected from the following important articles of national conduct and economy:

1. Emigration.—*Emigration* may be either the overflowing of a country, or the desertion. As the increase of the species is indefinite; and

the number of inhabitants which any given tract or surface can support, finite; it is evident that great numbers may be constantly leaving a country, and yet the country remain constantly full. Or whatever be the cause which invincibly limits the population of a country; when the number of the people has arrived at that limit, the progress of generation, beside continuing the succession, will supply multitudes for foreign emigration. In these two cases, emigration neither indicates any political decay, nor in truth diminishes the number of the people; nor ought to be prohibited or discouraged. But emigrants may relinquish their country, from a sense of insecurity, oppression, annoyance, and inconveniency. Neither, again, *here* is it emigration which wastes the people, but the evils that occasion it. It would be in vain, if it were practicable, to confine the inhabitants at home; for the same causes which drive them out of the country, would prevent their multiplication if they remained in it. Lastly; men may be tempted to change their situation by the allurement of a better climate, of a more refined or luxurious manner of living; by the prospect of wealth; or, sometimes, by the mere nominal advantage of higher wages and prices. This class of emigrants, with whom alone the laws can interfere with effect, will never, I think, be numerous. With the generality of a people, the attachment of mankind to their homes and country, the irksomeness of seeing new habitations, and of living amongst strangers, will outweigh, so long as men possess the necessaries of life in safety, or at least so long as they can obtain a provision for that mode of subsistence which the class of citizens to which they belong are accustomed to enjoy, all the inducements that the advantages of a foreign land can offer. There appear, therefore, to be few cases in which emigration can be prohibited, with advantage to the state; it appears also that emigration is an equivocal symptom, which will probably accompany the decline of the political body, but which may likewise attend a condition of perfect health and vigour.

II. Colonization.—The only view under which our subject will permit us to consider *colonization*, is in its tendency to augment the population of the parent state.—Suppose a fertile, but empty island, to lie within the reach of a country in which arts and manufactures are already established; suppose a colony sent out from such a country, to take possession of the island, and to live there under the protection and authority of their native government: the new settlers will naturally convert their labour to the cultivation of the vacant soil, and with the produce of that soil will draw a supply of manufactures from their countrymen at home. Whilst the inhabitants continue few, and lands cheap and fresh, the colonists will find it easier and more profitable to raise corn, or rear cattle, and with corn and cattle to purchase woollen cloth, for instance, or linen, than to spin or weave these articles for themselves. The mother-country, meanwhile, derives from this connexion an increase both of provision and employment. It promotes at once the two great requisites upon which the facility of subsistence, and by consequence the state of population, depend,—*production* and *distribution*; and this in a manner the most direct and beneficial. No situation can be imagined more favourable to population, than that of a country which works up goods for others, whilst these others are cultivating new tracts of land for them: for as, in a genial climate, and from a fresh soil, the labour of one man will raise provision enough for ten, it is manifest that, where all are employed in agriculture, much the greater part of the produce will be spared from the consumption; and that three out of four, at least to those who are maintained by it, will reside in the country which receives the redundancy. When the new country does not remit *provision* to the old one, the advantage is less; but still the exportation of wrought goods, by whatever return they are paid for, advances population in that secondary way, in which those trades promote it that are not employed in the production of provision. Whatever prejudice, therefore, some late events have excited against schemes of colonization, the system itself is founded in apparent national utility; and what is more, upon principles favourable to the common interest of human nature; for it does not appear by what other method newly-discovered and unfrequented countries can be peopled, or during the infancy of their establishment be protected or supplied. The error which we of this nation at present lament, seems to have consisted not so much in the original formation of colonies, as in the subsequent management; in imposing restrictions too rigorous, or in continuing them too long; in not perceiving the point of time when the irresistible order and progress of human affairs demand a change of laws and policy.

III. Money.—Where *money* abounds, the people are generally numerous: yet gold and silver neither feed nor clothe mankind; nor are they in all countries converted into provision by purchasing the necessaries of life at foreign markets; nor do they, in any country, compose those articles of personal or domestic ornament which certain orders of the community have learnt to regard as necessaries of life, and without the means of procuring which, they will not enter into family-establishments:—at least, this property of the precious metals obtains in a very small degree. The effect of money upon the number of the people, though visible to observation, is not explained without some difficulty. To understand this connexion properly, we must return to the proposition with which we concluded our reasoning upon the subject; "that population is chiefly promoted by employment." Now of employment, money is partly the indication, and partly the cause. The only way in which money regularly and spontaneously *flows into* a country, is in return for the goods that are sent out of it, or the work that is performed by it; and the only way in which money is *retained in* a country, is by the country's supplying, in a great measure, its own consumption of manufactures. Consequently, the quantity of money found in a country, denotes the amount of labour and employment; but still, employment, not money, is the cause of population; the accumulation of money being merely a collateral effect of the same cause, or a circumstance which accompanies the existence, and measures the operation, of that cause. And this is true of money, only whilst it is acquired by the industry of the inhabitants. The treasures which belong to a country by the possession of mines, or by the exaction of tribute from foreign dependencies, afford no conclusion concerning the state of

population. The influx from these sources may be immense, and yet the country remain poor and ill-peopled; of which we see an egregious example in the condition of Spain, since the acquisition of its South-American dominions.

But, secondly, money may become also a real and an operative *cause* of population, by acting as a stimulus to industry, and by facilitating the means of subsistence. The ease of subsistence, and the encouragement of industry, depend neither upon the price of labour, nor upon the price of provision, but upon the proportion which one bears to the other. Now the influx of money into a country, naturally tends to advance this proportion; that is, every fresh accession of money raises the price of labour before it raises the price of provision. When money is brought from abroad, the persons, be they who they will, into whose hands it first arrives, do not buy up provision with it, but apply it to the purchase and payment of labour. If the state receives it, the state dispenses what it receives amongst soldiers, sailors, artificers, engineers, shipwrights, workmen;—if private persons bring home treasures of gold and silver they usually expend them in the building of houses, the improvement of estates, the purchase of furniture, dress, equipage, in articles of luxury or splendour:—if the merchant be enriched by returns of his foreign commerce, he applies his increased capital to the enlargement of his business at home. The money ere long comes to market for provision; but it comes thither through the hands of the manufacturer, the artist, the husbandman, and labourer. Its effect, therefore, upon the price of art and labour, will *precede* its effect upon the price of provision; and during the interval between one effect and the other, the means of subsistence will be multiplied and facilitated, as well as industry be excited by new rewards. When the greater plenty of money in circulation has produced an advance in the price of provision, corresponding to the advanced price of labour, its effect ceases. The labourer no longer gains any thing by the increase of his wages. It is not, therefore, the quantity of specie collected into a country, but the continual increase of that quantity, from which the advantage arises to employment and population. It is only the *accession* of money which produces the effect, and it is only by money constantly flowing into a country that the effect can be constant. Now whatever consequence arises to the country from the influx of money, the contrary may be expected to follow from the diminution of its quantity: and accordingly we find, that whatever cause drains off the specie of a country, faster than the streams which feed it can supply, not only impoverishes the country, but depopulates it. The knowledge and experience of this effect have given occasion to a phrase which occurs in almost every discourse upon commerce or politics. The *balance of trade* with any foreign nation is said to be against or in favour of a country, simply as it tends to carry money out, or bring it in: that is, according as the price of the imports exceeds or falls short of the price of the exports: so invariably is the increase or diminution of the specie of a country regarded as a test of the public advantage or detriment which arises from any branch of its commerce.

IV. Taxation.—As *taxes* take nothing out of a country; as they do not diminish the public stock, only vary the distribution of it, they are not necessarily prejudicial to population. If the state exact money from certain members of the community, she dispenses it also amongst other members of the same community. They who contribute to the revenue, and they who are supported or benefited by the expenses of government, are to be placed one against the other; and whilst what the subsistence of one part is profited by receiving, compensates for what that of the other suffers by paying, the common fund of the society is not lessened. This is true: but it must be observed, that although the sum distributed by the state be always *equal* to the sum collected from the people, yet the gain and loss to the means of subsistence may be very *unequal;* and the balance will remain on the wrong or the right side of the account, according as the money passes by taxation from the industrious to the idle, from the many to the few, from those who want to those who abound, or in a contrary direction. For instance: a tax upon coaches, to be laid out in the repair of roads, would probably improve the population of a neighbourhood; a tax upon cottages, to be ultimately expended in the purchase and support of coaches, would certainly diminish it. In like manner, a tax upon wine or tea distributed in bounties to fishermen or husbandmen, would augment the provision of a country; a tax upon fisheries and husbandry, however indirect or concealed, to be converted, when raised, to the procuring of wine or tea for the idle and opulent, would naturally impair the public stock. The effect, therefore, of taxes, upon the means of subsistence, depends not so much upon the amount of the sum levied, as upon the object of the tax and the application. Taxes likewise may be so adjusted as to conduce to the restraint of luxury, and the correction of vice; to the encouragement of industry, trade, agriculture, and marriage. Taxes thus contrived, become rewards and penalties; not only sources of revenue, but instruments of police. Vices indeed themselves cannot be taxed, without holding forth such a conditional toleration of them as to destroy men's perception of their guilt; a tax comes to be considered as a commutation: the materials, however, and incentives of vice, may. Although, for instance, drunkenness would be, on this account, an unfit object of taxation, yet public houses and spirituous liquors are very properly subjected to heavy imposts.

Nevertheless, although it may be true that taxes cannot be pronounced to be detrimental to population, by an absolute necessity in their nature; and though, under some modifications, and when urged only to a certain extent, they may even operate in favour of it; yet it will be found, in a great plurality of instances, that their tendency is noxious. Let it be supposed that nine families inhabit a neighbourhood, each possessing barely the means of subsistence, or of that mode of subsistence which custom hath established amongst them; let a tenth family be quartered upon these, to be supported by a tax raised from the nine; or rather, let one of the nine have his income augmented by a similar deduction from the incomes of the rest; in either of these cases, it is evident that the whole district would be broken up: for as the entire income of each is supposed to be barely sufficient for the establishment which it maintains, a deduction of any part

destroys that establishment. Now it is no answer to this objection, it is no apology for the grievance, to say, that nothing is taken out of the neighbourhood; that the stock is not diminished: the mischief is done by deranging the distribution. Nor, again, is the luxury of one family, or even the maintenance of an additional family, a recompense to the country for the ruin of nine others.—Nor, lastly, will it alter the effect though it may conceal the cause, that the contribution, instead of being levied directly upon each day's wages, is mixed up in the price of some article of constant use and consumption, as in a tax upon candles, malt, leather, or fuel. This example illustrates the tendency of taxes to obstruct subsistence; and the minutest degree of this obstruction will be felt in the formation of families. The example, indeed, forms an extreme case; the evil is magnified, in order to render its operation distinct and visible. In real life, families may not be broken up, or forced from their habitation, houses be quitted, or countries suddenly deserted, in consequence of any new imposition whatever; but marriages will become gradually less frequent.

It seems necessary, however, to distinguish between the operation of a new tax, and the effect of taxes which have been long established. In the course of circulation, the money may flow back to the hands from which it was taken. The proportion between the supply and the expense of subsistence, which had been disturbed by the tax, may at length recover itself again. In the instance just now stated, the addition of a tenth family to the neighbourhood, or the enlarged expenses of one of the nine, may, in some shape or other, so advance the profits, or increase the employment, of the rest, as to make full restitution for the share of their property of which it deprives them; or, what is more likely to happen, a reduction may take place in their mode of living, suited to the abridgment of their incomes. Yet still the ultimate and permanent effect of taxation, though distinguishable from the impression of a new tax, is generally adverse to population. The *proportion* above spoken of, can only be restored by one side or other of the following alternative: by the people either contracting their wants, which at the same time diminishes consumption and employment; or by raising the price of labour, which necessarily adding to the price of the productions and manufactures of the country, checks their sale at foreign markets. A nation which is burthened with taxes, must always be undersold by a nation which is free from them, unless the difference be made up by some singular advantage of climate, soil, skill, or industry. This quality belongs to all taxes which affect the mass of the community, even when imposed upon the properest objects, and applied to the fairest purposes. But abuses are inseparable from the disposal of public money. As governments are usually administered, the produce of public taxes is expended upon a train of gentry, in the maintaining of pomp, or in the purchase of influence. The conversion of property which taxes effectuate, when they are employed in this manner, is attended with obvious evils. It takes from the industrious, to give to the idle; it increases the number of the latter; it tends to accumulation; it sacrifices the conveniency of many to the luxury of a few; it makes no return to the people, from whom the tax is drawn, that is satisfactory or intelligible; it encourages no activity which is useful or productive.

The sum to be raised being settled, a wise statesman will contrive his taxes principally with a view to their effect upon *population*; that is, he will so adjust them as to give the least possible obstruction to those means of subsistence by which the mass of the community is maintained. We are accustomed to an opinion, that a tax, to be just, ought to be accurately proportioned to the circumstances of the persons who pay it. But upon what, it might be asked, is this opinion founded; unless it could be shown that such a proportion interferes the least with the general conveniency of subsistence? Whereas I should rather believe, that a tax, constructed with a view to that conveniency, ought to rise upon the different classes of the community, in a much higher ratio than the simple proportion of their incomes. The point to be regarded is, not what men have, but what they can spare; and it is evident that a man who possesses a thousand pounds a year, can more easily give up a hundred, than a man with a hundred pounds a year can part with ten; that is, those habits of life which are reasonable and innocent, and upon the ability to continue which the formation of families depends, will be much less affected by the one deduction than the other: it is still more evident, that a man of a hundred pounds a year would not be so much distressed in his subsistence, by a demand from him of ten pounds, as a man of ten pounds a year would be by the loss of one: to which we must add, that the population of every country being replenished by the marriages of the lowest ranks of the society, their accommodation and relief become of more importance to the state, than the conveniency of any higher but less numerous order of its citizens. But whatever be the proportion which public expediency directs, whether the simple, the duplicate, or any higher or intermediate proportion of men's incomes, it can never be attained by any *single* tax: as no single object of taxation can be found, which measures the ability of the subject with sufficient generality and exactness. It is only by a system and variety of taxes, mutually balancing and equalising one another, that a due proportion can be preserved. For instance: if a tax upon lands press with greater hardship upon those who live in the country, it may be properly counterpoised by a tax upon the rent of houses, which will affect principally the inhabitants of large towns. Distinctions may also be framed in some taxes, which shall allow abatements or exemptions to married persons; to the parents of a certain number of legitimate children; to improvers of the soil; to particular modes of cultivation, as to tillage in preference to pasturage; and in general to that industry which is immediately *productive*, in preference to that which is only *instrumental*; but above all, which may leave the heaviest part of the burthen upon the methods, whatever they be, of acquiring wealth without industry, or even of subsisting in idleness.

V. Exportation of bread-corn.—Nothing seems to have a more positive tendency to reduce the number of the people, than the sending abroad part of the provision by which they are maintained; yet this has been the policy of legislators very studious of the improvement of their country. In order to reconcile ourselves to a practice which

appears to militate with the chief interest, that is, with the population of the country that adopts it, we must be reminded of a maxim which belongs to the productions both of nature and art, "that it is impossible to have enough without a superfluity." The point of sufficiency cannot, in any case, be so exactly hit upon, as to have nothing to spare, yet never to want. This is peculiarly true of bread-corn, of which the annual increase is extremely valuable. As it is necessary that the crop be adequate to the consumption in a year of scarcity, it must, of consequence, greatly exceed it in a year of plenty. A redundancy therefore will occasionally arise from the very care that is taken to secure the people against the danger of want; and it is manifest that the exportation of this redundancy subtracts nothing from the number that can regularly be maintained by the produce of the soil. Moreover, as the exportation of corn, under these circumstances, is attended with no direct injury to population, so the benefits which indirectly arise to population from foreign commerce, belongs to this, in common with other species of trade; together with the peculiar advantage of presenting a constant incitement to the skill and industry of the husbandman, by the promise of a certain sale and an adequate price, under every contingency of season and produce. There is another situation, in which corn may not only be exported, but in which the people can thrive by no other means; that is, of a newly settled country, with a fertile soil. The exportation of a large proportion of the corn which a country produces, proves, it is true, that the inhabitants have not yet attained to the number which the country is capable of maintaining: but it does not prove but that they may be hastening to this limit with the utmost practicable celerity, which is the perfection to be sought for in a young establishment. In all cases except these two, and in the former of them to any greater degree than what is necessary to take off occasional redundancies, the exportation of corn is either itself noxious to population, or argues a defect of population arising from some other cause.

VI. Abridgment of labour.—It has long been made a question, whether those mechanical contrivances which *abridge labour*, by performing the same work by fewer hands, be detrimental or not to the population of a country. From what has been delivered in preceding parts of the present chapter, it will be evident that this question is equivalent to another,—whether such contrivances diminish or not the quantity of employment. The first and most obvious effect undoubtedly is this; because, if one man be made to do what three men did before, two are immediately discharged: but if, by some more general and remoter consequence, they increase the demand for work, or, what is the same thing, prevent the diminution of that demand, in a greater proportion than they contract the number of hands by which it is performed, the quantity of employment, upon the whole, will gain an addition. Upon which principle it may be observed, first, that whenever a mechanical invention succeeds in one place, it is necessary that it be imitated in every other, where the same manufacture is carried on; for, it is manifest, that he who has the benefit of a conciser operation, will soon outvie and undersell a competitor who continues to use a more circuitous labour. It is also true, in the second place, that whoever *first* discover or adopt a mechanical improvement, will, for some time, draw to themselves an increase of employment; and that this preference may continue even after the improvement has become general; for, in every kind of trade, it is not only a great but permanent advantage, to have once preoccupied the public reputation. Thirdly, after every superiority which might be derived from the possession of a secret, has ceased, it may be well questioned whether even then any loss can accrue to employment. The same money will be spared to the same article still. Wherefore, in proportion as the article can be afforded at a lower price, by reason of an easier or shorter process in the manufacture, it will either grow into more general use, or an improvement will take place in the quality and fabric, which will demand a proportionable addition of hands. The number of persons employed in the manufactory of stockings, has not, I apprehend, decreased since the invention of stocking-mills. The amount of what is expended upon the article, after subtracting from it the price of the raw material, and consequently what is paid for work in this branch of our manufactories, is not less than it was before. Goods of a finer texture are worn in the place of coarser. This is the change which the invention has produced; and which compensates to the manufactory for every other inconveniency. Add to which, that in the above, and in almost every instance, an improvement which conduces to the recommendation of a manufactory, either by the cheapness or the quality of the goods, draws up after it many dependent employments, in which no abbreviation has taken place.

From the reasoning that has been pursued, and the various considerations suggested in this chapter, a judgment may, in some sort, be formed, how far regulations of law are in their nature capable of contributing to the support and advancement of population. I say *how far*; for, as in many subjects, so especially in those which relate to commerce, to plenty, to riches, and to the number of people, more is wont to be expected from laws, than laws can do. Laws can only imperfectly restrain that dissoluteness of manners, which, by diminishing the frequency of marriages, impairs the very source of population. Laws cannot regulate the wants of mankind, their mode of living, or their desire of those superfluities which fashion, more irresistible than laws, has once introduced into general usage; or, in other words, has erected into necessaries of life. Laws cannot induce men to enter into marriages, when the expenses of a family must deprive them of that system of accommodation to which they have habituated their expectations. Laws, by their protection, by assuring to the labourer the fruit and profit of his labour, may help to make a people industrious; but without industry, the laws cannot provide either subsistence or employment; laws cannot make corn grow without toil and care, or trade flourish without art and diligence. In spite of all laws, the expert, laborious, honest workman, will be *employed*, in preference to the lazy, the unskilful, the fraudulent, and evasive: and this is not more true of two inhabitants of the same village, than it is of the people of two different countries, which communicate either with each other, or with

the rest of the world. The natural basis of trade is rivalship of quality and price; or, which is the same thing, of skill and industry. Every attempt to *force* trade by operation of law, that is, by compelling persons to buy goods at one market, which they can obtain cheaper and better from another, is sure to be either eluded by the quick-sightedness and incessant activity of private interest, or to be frustrated by retaliation. One half of the commercial laws of many states are calculated merely to counteract the restrictions which have been imposed by other states. Perhaps the only way in which the interposition of law is salutary in trade, is in the prevention of frauds.

Next to the indispensable requisites of internal peace and security, the chief advantage which can be derived to population from the interference of law, appears to me to consist in the encouragement of *agriculture*. This, at least, is the direct way of increasing the number of the people: every other mode being effectual only by its influence upon this. Now the principal expedient by which such a purpose can be promoted, is to adjust the laws of property, as nearly as possible, to the two following rules: first, "to give to the occupier all the power over the soil, which is necessary for its perfect cultivation;"—secondly, "to assign the whole profit of every improvement to the persons by whose activity it is carried on." What we call property in land, as hath been observed above, is power over it. Now it is indifferent to the public in whose hands this power resides, if it be rightly used; it matters not to whom the land belongs, if it be well cultivated. When we lament that great estates are often united in the same hand, or complain that one man possesses what would be sufficient for a thousand, we suffer ourselves to be misled by words. The owner of ten thousand pounds a-year, *consumes* little more of the produce of the soil than the owner of ten pounds a-year. If the cultivation be equal, the estate in the hands of one great lord, affords subsistence and employment to the same number of persons as it would do if it were divided amongst a hundred proprietors. In like manner we ought to judge of the effect upon the public interest, which may arise from lands being holden by the king, or by the subject; by private persons, or by corporations; by laymen, or ecclesiastics; in fee, or for life; by virtue of office, or in right of inheritance. I do not mean that these varieties make no difference, but I mean that all the difference they do make respects the cultivation of the lands which are so holden.

There exist in this country, conditions of tenure which condemn the land itself to perpetual sterility. Of this kind is the right of *common*, which precludes each proprietor from the improvement, or even the convenient occupation, of his estate, without (what seldom can be obtained) the consent of many others. This tenure is also usually embarrassed by the interference of *manorial* claims, under which it often happens that the surface belongs to one owner, and the soil to another; so that neither owner can stir a clod without the concurrence of his partner in the property. In many manors, the tenant is restrained from granting leases beyond a short term of years; which renders every plan of solid improvement impracticable. In these cases, the owner wants, what the first rule of rational policy requires, "sufficient power over the soil for its perfect cultivation." This power ought to be extended to him by some easy and general law of enfranchisement, partition, and enclosure; which, though compulsory upon the lord, or the rest of the tenants, whilst it has in view the melioration of the soil, and tenders an equitable compensation for every right that it takes away, is neither more arbitrary, nor more dangerous to the stability of property, than that which is done in the construction of roads, bridges, embankments, navigable canals, and indeed in almost every public work, in which private owners of land are obliged to accept that price for their property which an indifferent jury may award. It may here, however, be proper to observe, that although the enclosure of wastes and pastures be generally beneficial to population, yet the enclosure of lands in tillage, in order to convert them into pastures, is as generally hurtful.

But, secondly, agriculture is discouraged by every constitution of landed property which lets in those, who have no concern in the improvement, to a participation of the profit. This objection is applicable to all such customs of manors as subject the proprietor, upon the death of the lord or tenant, or the alienation of the estate, to a fine apportioned to the improved value of the land. But of all institutions which are in this way adverse to cultivation and improvement, none is so noxious as that of *tithes*. A claimant here enters into the produce, who contributed no assistance whatever to the production. When years, perhaps, of care and toil have matured an improvement; when the husbandman sees new crops ripening to his skill and industry; the moment he is ready to put his sickle to the grain, he finds himself compelled to divide his harvest with a stranger. Tithes are a tax not only upon industry, but upon that industry which feeds mankind; upon that species of exertion which it is the aim of all wise laws to cherish and promote; and to uphold and excite which, composes, as we have seen, the main benefit that the community receives from the whole system of trade, and the success of commerce. And, together with the more general inconveniency that attends the exaction of tithes, there is this additional evil, in the mode at least according to which they are collected at present, that they operate as a bounty upon pasturage. The burthen of the tax falls with its chief, if not with its whole weight, upon tillage; that is to say, upon that precise mode of cultivation, which, as hath been shown above, it is the business of the state to relieve and remunerate, in preference to every other. No measure of such extensive concern appears to me so practicable, nor any single alteration so beneficial, as the conversion of tithes into corn-rents. This commutation, I am convinced, might be so adjusted as to secure to the tithe-holder a complete and perpetual equivalent for his interest, and to leave to industry its full operation, and entire reward.

CHAPTER XII.

Of War, and of Military Establishments.

Because the Christian Scriptures describe wars as what they are,—as crimes or judgments, some have been led to believe that it is unlawful for a Christian to bear arms. But it should be remembered that it may be necessary for individuals to unite their force, and for this end to resign themselves to the direction of a common will; and yet

it may be true that that will is often actuated by criminal motives, and often determined to destructive purposes. Hence, although the origin of wars be ascribed, in Scripture, to the operation of lawless and malignant passion;* and though war itself be enumerated among the sorest calamities with which a land can be visited, the profession of a soldier is nowhere forbidden or condemned. When the soldiers demanded of John the Baptist what they should do, he said unto them, "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages."† In which answer we do not find that, in order to prepare themselves for the reception of the kingdom of God, it was required of soldiers to relinquish their profession, but only that they should beware of the vices of which that profession was accused. The precept which follows, "Be content with your wages," supposed them to continue in their situation. It was of a Roman centurion that Christ pronounced that memorable eulogy, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."‡ The first Gentile converts§ who was received into the Christian church, and to whom the Gospel was imparted by the immediate and especial direction of Heaven, held the same station: and in the history of this transaction we discover not the smallest intimation, that Cornelius, upon becoming a Christian, quitted the service of the Roman legion; that his profession was objected to, or his continuance in it considered as in any wise inconsistent with his new character.

In applying the principles of morality to the affairs of nations, the difficulty which meets us, arises from hence, "that the particular consequence sometimes appears to exceed the value of the general rule." In this circumstance is founded the only distinction that exists between the case of independent states, and of independent individuals. In the transactions of private persons, no advantage that results from the breach of a general law of justice, can compensate to the public for the violation of the law; in the concerns of empire, this may sometimes be doubted. Thus, that the faith of promises ought to be maintained, as far as is lawful, and as far as was intended by the parties, whatever inconveniency either of them may suffer by his fidelity, in the intercourse of private life, is seldom disputed; because it is evident to almost every man who reflects upon the subject, that the common happiness gains more by the preservation of the rule, than it could do by the removal of the inconveniency. But when the adherence to a public treaty would enslave a whole people; would block up seas, rivers, or harbours; depopulate cities; condemn fertile regions to eternal desolation; cut off a country from its sources of provision, or deprive it of those commercial advantages to which its climate, produce, or situation naturally entitle it: the magnitude of the particular evil induces us to call in question the obligation of the general rule. Moral Philosophy furnishes no precise solution to these doubts. She cannot pronounce that any rule of morality is so rigid as to bend to no exceptions; nor, on the other hand, can she comprise these exceptions within any previous description. She confesses that the obligation of every law depends upon its ultimate utility; that this utility, having a finite and determinate value, situations may be feigned, and consequently may possibly arise, in which the general tendency is outweighed by the enormity of the particular mischief: but she recalls, at the same time, to the consideration of the inquirer, the almost inestimable importance, as of other general rules of relative justice, so especially of national and personal fidelity; the unseen, if not unbounded, extent of the mischief which must follow from the want of it; the danger of leaving it to the sufferer to decide upon the comparison of particular and general consequences; and the still greater danger of such decisions being drawn into future precedents. If treaties, for instance, be no longer binding than whilst they are convenient, or until the inconveniency ascend to a certain point, (which point must be fixed by the judgment, or rather by the feelings, of the complaining party;) or if such an opinion, after being authorised by a few examples, come at length to prevail; one and almost the only method of averting or closing the calamities of war, of either preventing or putting a stop to the destruction of mankind, is lost to the world for ever. We do not say that no evil can exceed this, nor any possible advantage compensate it; but we say that a loss, which affects *all*, will scarcely be made up to the common stock of human happiness by any benefit that can be procured to a single nation, which, however respectable when compared with any other single nation, bears an inconsiderable proportion to the whole. These, however, are the principles upon which the calculation is to be formed. It is enough, in this place, to remark the cause which produces the hesitation that we sometimes feel, in applying rules of personal probity to the conduct of nations.

As between individuals it is found impossible to ascertain every duty by an immediate reference to public utility, not only because such reference is oftentimes too remote for the direction of private consciences, but because a multitude of cases arise in which it is indifferent to the general interest by what rule men act, though it be absolutely necessary that they act by some constant and known rule or other: and as, for these reasons, certain positive constitutions are wont to be established in every society, which, when established, become as obligatory as the original principles of natural justice themselves; so, likewise, it is between independent communities. Together with those maxims of universal equity which are common to states and to individuals, and by which the rights and conduct of the one as well as the other, ought to be adjusted, when they fall within the scope and application of such maxims; there exists also amongst sovereigns a system of artificial jurisprudence, under the name of the *law of nations*. In this code are found the rules which determine the right to vacant or newly discovered countries; those which relate to the protection of fugitives, the privileges of ambassadors, the condition and duties of neutrality, the immunities of neutral ships, ports, and coasts, the distance from shore to which these immunities extend, the distinction between free and contraband goods, and a variety of subjects of the same kind. Concerning which examples, and indeed the principal part of what is called the *jus gentium*, it may be observed, that the rules derive their moral force, (by which I mean the regard that ought to be paid to them by

* James iv. 1. † Luke iii. 14.
‡ Luke vii. 9. § Acts. x. 1.

the consciences of sovereigns,) not from their internal reasonableness or justice, for many of them are perfectly arbitrary, nor yet from the authority by which they were established, for the greater part have grown insensibly into usage, without any public compact, formal acknowledgment, or even known original; but simply from the fact of their being established, and the general duty of conforming to established rules upon questions, and between parties, where nothing but positive regulations can prevent disputes, and where disputes are followed by such destructive consequences. The first of the instances which we have just now enumerated, may be selected for the illustration of this remark. The nations of Europe consider the sovereignty of newly-discovered countries as belonging to the prince or state whose subject makes the discovery: and in pursuance of this rule, it is usual for a navigator, who falls upon an unknown shore, to take possession of it, in the name of his sovereign at home, by erecting his standard, or displaying his flag upon a desert coast. Now nothing can be more fanciful, or less substantiated by any considerations of reason or justice, than the right which such discovery, or the transient occupation and idle ceremony that accompany it, confer upon the country of the discoverer. Nor can any stipulation be produced, by which the rest of the world have bound themselves to submit to this pretension. Yet when we reflect that the claims to newly-discovered countries can hardly be settled, between the different nations which frequent them, without some positive rule or other; that such claims, if left unsettled, would prove sources of ruinous and fatal contentions; that the rule already proposed, however arbitrary, possesses one principal quality of a rule,—determination and certainty: above all, that it is acquiesced in, and that no one has power to substitute another, however he might contrive a better, in its place: when we reflect upon these properties of the rule, or rather upon these consequences of rejecting its authority, we are led to ascribe to it the virtue and obligation of a precept of natural justice, because we perceive in it that which is the foundation of justice itself,—public importance and utility. And a prince who should dispute this rule, for the want of regularity in its formation, or of intelligible justice in its principle, and by such disputes should disturb the tranquillity of nations, and at the same time lay the foundation of future disturbances, would be little less criminal than he who breaks the public peace, by a violation of engagements to which he had himself consented, or by an attack upon those national rights which are founded immediately in the law of nature, and in the first perceptions of equity. The same thing may be repeated of the rules which the law of nations prescribes in the other instances that were mentioned, namely, that the obscurity of their origin, or the arbitrariness of their principle, subtracts nothing from the respect that is due to them, when once established.

War may be considered with a view to its *causes* and its *conduct*.

The *justifying* causes of war, are, deliberate invasions of right, and the necessity of maintaining such a balance of power amongst neighbouring nations, as that no single state, or confederacy of states, be strong enough to overwhelm the rest. The objects of just war, are, precaution, defence, or reparation. In a larger sense, every just war is a *defensive* war, inasmuch as every just war supposes an injury perpetrated, attempted, or feared.

The *insufficient* causes or *unjustifiable* motives of war, are the family alliances, the personal friendships, or the personal quarrels, of princes; the internal disputes which are carried on in other nations; the justice of other wars; the extension of territory, or of trade; the misfortunes or accidental weakness of a neighbouring or rival nation.

There are *two* lessons of rational and sober policy, which, if it were possible to inculcate them into the councils of princes, would exclude many of the motives of war, and allay that restless ambition which is constantly stirring up one part of mankind against another.

The first of these lessons admonishes princes to "place their glory and their emulation, not in extent of territory, but in raising the greatest quantity of happiness out of a given territory." The enlargement of territory by conquest is not only not a just object of war, but in the greater part of the instances in which it is attempted, not even desirable. It is certainly not desirable where it adds nothing to the numbers, the enjoyments, or the security, of the conquerors. What commonly is gained to a nation, by the annexing of new dependencies, or the subjugation of other countries to its dominion, but a wider frontier to defend; more interfering claims to vindicate; more quarrels, more enemies, more rebellions, to encounter; a greater force to keep up by sea and land; more services to provide for, and more establishments to pay? And, in order to draw from these acquisitions something that may make up for the charge of keeping them, a revenue is to be extorted, or a monopoly to be enforced and watched, at an expense which costs half their produce. Thus the provinces are oppressed, in order to pay for being ill-governed; and the original state is exhausted in maintaining a feeble authority over discontented subjects. No assignable portion of country is benefited by the change; and if the sovereign appear to himself to be enriched or strengthened, when every part of his dominion is made poorer and weaker than it was, it is probable that he is deceived by appearances. Or were it true that the grandeur of the prince is magnified by those exploits; the glory which is purchased, and the ambition which is gratified, by the distress of one country without adding to the happiness of another, which at the same time enslaves the new and impoverishes the ancient part of the empire, by whatever names it may be known or flattered, ought to be an object of universal execration; and oftentimes not more so to the vanquished, than to the very people whose armies or whose treasures have achieved the victory.

There are, indeed, two cases in which the extension of territory may be of real advantage, and to both parties. The first is, where an empire thereby reaches to the natural boundaries which divide it from the rest of the world. Thus we account the British Channel the natural boundary which separates the nations of England and France; and if France possessed any countries on this, or England any cities or provinces on that, side of the sea, recovery of such towns and districts

to what may be called their natural sovereign, though it may not be a just reason for commencing war, would be a proper use to make of victory. The other case is, where neighbouring states, being severally too small and weak to defend themselves against the dangers that surround them, can only be safe by a strict and constant junction of their strength: here conquest will affect the purposes of confederation and alliance; and the union which it produces is often more close and permanent than that which results from voluntary association. Thus, if the heptarchy had continued in England, the different kingdoms of it might have separately fallen a prey to foreign invasion: and although the interest and danger of one part of the island were in truth common to every other part, it might have been difficult to have circulated this persuasion amongst independent nations, or to have united them in any regular or steady opposition to their continental enemies, had not the valour and fortune of an enterprising prince incorporated the whole into a single monarchy. Here, the conquered gained as much by the revolution, as the conquerors. In like manner, and for the same reason, when the two royal families of Spain were met together in one race of princes, and the several provinces of France had devolved into the possession of a single sovereign, it became unsafe for the inhabitants of Great Britain any longer to remain under separate governments. The union of England and Scotland, which transformed two quarrelsome neighbours into one powerful empire, and which was first brought about by the course of succession, and afterwards completed by amicable convention, would have been a fortunate conclusion of hostilities, had it been effected by the operations of war.—These two cases being admitted, namely, the obtaining of natural boundaries and barriers, and the including under the same government those who have a common danger and a common enemy to guard against; I know not whether a third can be thought of, in which the extension of empire by conquest is useful even to the conquerors.

The second rule of prudence which ought to be recommended to those who conduct the affairs of nations, is, "never to pursue national *honour* as distinct from national *interest*." This rule acknowledges that it is often necessary to assert the honour of a nation for the sake of its interest. The spirit and courage of a people are supported by flattering their pride. Concessions which betray too much of fear or weakness, though they relate to points of mere ceremony, invite demands and attacks of more serious importance. Our rule allows all this; and only directs that, when points of honour become subjects of contention between sovereigns, or are likely to be made the occasion of war, they be estimated with a reference to utility, and not *by themselves*. "The dignity of his crown, the honour of his flag, the glory of his arms," in the mouth of a prince, are stately and imposing terms; but the ideas they inspire, are insatiable. It may be always glorious to conquer, whatever be the justice of the war, or the price of the victory. The dignity of a sovereign may not permit him to recede from claims of homage and respect, at whatever expense of national peace and happiness they are to be maintained; however unjust they may have been in their original, or in their continuance however useless to the possessor, or mortifying and vexatious to other states. The pursuit of honour, when set loose from the admonitions of prudence, becomes in kings a wild and romantic passion: eager to engage, and gathering fury in its progress, it is checked by no difficulties, repelled by no dangers; it forgets or despises those considerations of safety, ease, wealth, and plenty, which, in the eye of true public wisdom, compose the objects to which the renown of arms, the fame of victory, are only instrumental and subordinate. The pursuit of interest, on the other hand, is a sober principle; computes costs and consequences; is cautious of entering into war; stops in time: when regulated by those universal maxims of relative justice which belong to the affairs of communities as well as of private persons, it is the right principle for nations to proceed by: even when it trespasses upon these regulations, it is much less dangerous, because much more temperate than the other.

II. The conduct of war.—If the cause and end of war be justifiable; all the means that appear necessary to the end, are justifiable also. This is the principle which defends those extremities to which the violence of war usually proceeds: for since war is a contest by *force* between parties who acknowledge no common superior, and since it includes not in its idea the supposition of any convention which should place limits to the operations of force, it has naturally no boundary but that in which force terminates,—the destruction of the life against which the force is directed. Let it be observed, however, that the license of war authorises no acts of hostility but what are necessary or conducive to the end and object of the war. Gratuitous barbarities borrow no excuse from this plea: of which kind is every cruelty and every insult that serves only to exasperate the sufferings, or to incense the hatred, of an enemy, without weakening his strength, or in any manner tending to procure his submission; such as the slaughter of captives, the subjecting of them to indignities or torture, the violation of women, the profanation of temples, the demolition of public buildings, libraries, statues, and in general the destruction or defacing of works that conduce nothing to annoyance or defence. These enormities are prohibited not only by the practice of civilized nations, but by the law of nature itself; as having no proper tendency to accelerate the termination, or accomplish the object of the war; and as containing that which in peace and war is equally unjustifiable,—ultimate and gratuitous mischief.

There are other restrictions imposed upon the conduct of war, not by the law of nature primarily, but by the *laws of war*, first, and by the law of nature as seconding and ratifying the laws of war. The laws of war are part of the law of nations; and founded, as to their authority, upon the same principle with the rest of that code, namely, upon the fact of their being established, no matter when or by whom; upon the expectation of their being mutually observed, in consequence of that establishment; and upon the general utility which results from such observance. The binding force of these rules is the greater, because the regard that is paid to them must be universal or none. The breach of the rule can only be punished by the subversion of the rule itself: on which account, the whole mischief that ensues from the laws of those salutary restrictions which such rules prescribe, is justly chargeable upon the first aggressor. To this consideration may be referred the duty of refraining in war from poison and from assassina-

tion. If the law of nature simply be consulted, it may be difficult to distinguish between these and other methods of destruction, which are practised without scruple by nations at war. If it be lawful to kill an enemy at all, it seems lawful to do so by one mode of death as well as by another; by a dose of poison, as by the point of a sword; by the hand of an assassin, as by the attack of an army: for if it be said that one species of assault leaves to an enemy the power of defending itself against it, and that the other two does not; it may be answered, that we possess at least the same right to cut off an enemy's defence, that we have to seek his destruction. In this manner might the question be debated, if there existed no rule or law of war upon the subject. But when we observe that such practices are at present excluded by the usage and opinions of civilized nations; that the first recourse to them would be followed by instant retaliation; that the mutual license which such attempts must introduce, would fill both sides with the misery of continual dread and suspicion, without adding to the strength or success of either; that when the example came to be more generally imitated, which it soon would be, after the sentiment that condemns it had been once broken in upon, it would greatly aggravate the horrors and calamities of war, yet procure no superiority to any of the nations engaged in it; when we view these effects, we join in the public reprobation of such fatal expedients, as of the admission amongst mankind of new and enormous evils without necessity or advantage.—The law of nature, we see at length, forbids these innovations, as so many transgressions of a beneficial general rule actually subsisting.

The license of war then acknowledges *two* limitations: it authorises no hostilities which have not an apparent tendency to effectuate the object of the war; it respects those positive laws which the custom of nations hath sanctified, and which whilst they are mutually conformed to, mitigate the calamities of war, without weakening its operations, or diminishing the power or safety of belligerent states.

Long and various experience seems to have convinced the nations of Europe, that nothing but a *standing army* can oppose a standing army, where the numbers on each side bear any moderate proportion to one another. The first standing army that appeared in Europe after the fall of the Roman legion, was that which was erected in France, by Charles VII. about the middle of the fifteenth century: and that the institution hath since become general, can only be attributed to the superiority and success which are every where observed to attend it. The truth is, the closeness, regularity, and quickness, of their movements; the unreserved, instantaneous, and almost mechanical, obedience to orders; the sense of personal honour, and the familiarity with danger, which belong to a disciplined, veteran, and embodied soldiery, give such firmness and intrepidity to their approach, such weight and execution to their attack, as are not to be withstood by loose ranks of occasional and newly-levied troops, who are liable by their inexperience to disorder and confusion, and in whom fear is constantly augmented by novelty and surprise. It is possible that a *militia*, with a great excess of numbers, and a ready supply of recruits may sustain a defensive or a flying war against regular troops: it is also true that any service, which keeps soldiers for a while together, and inures them by little and little to the habits of war and the dangers of action, transforms them in effect into a standing army. But upon this plan it may be necessary for almost a whole nation to go out to war to repel an invader; beside that a people so unprepared must always have the seat, and with it the miseries, of war at home, being utterly incapable of carrying their operations into a foreign country.

From the acknowledged superiority of standing armies, it follows, not only that it is unsafe for a nation to disband its regular troops, whilst neighbouring kingdoms retain theirs; but also that regular troops provide for the public service at the least possible expense. I suppose a certain quantity of military strength to be necessary, and I say that a standing army costs the community less than any other establishment which presents to an enemy the same force. The constant drudgery of low employments is not only incompatible with any great degree of perfection or expertness in the profession of a soldier, but the profession of a soldier almost always unfits men for the business of regular occupations. Of three inhabitants of a village, it is better that one should addict himself entirely to arms, and the other two stay constantly at home to cultivate the ground, than that all three should mix the avocations of a camp, with the business of husbandry. By the former arrangement, the country gains one complete soldier, and two industrious husbandmen; from the latter it receives three raw militia-men, who are at the same time three idle and profligate peasants. It should be considered also, that the emergencies of war wait not for seasons. Where there is no standing army ready for immediate service, it may be necessary to call the reaper from the fields in harvest, or the ploughman in seed time; and the provision of a whole year may perish by the interruption of one month's labour. A standing army, therefore, is not only a more effectual, but a cheaper, method of providing for the public safety, than any other, because it adds more than any other to the common strength, and takes less from that which composes the wealth of a nation,—its stock of productive industry.

There is yet another distinction between standing armies and militias, which deserves a more attentive consideration than any that has been mentioned. When the state relies, for its defence, upon a militia, it is necessary that arms be put into the hands of the people at large. The militia itself must be numerous, in proportion to the want or inferiority of its discipline, and the imbecilities or defects of its constitution. Moreover, as such a militia must be supplied by rotation, allotment, or some mode of succession whereby they who have served a certain time are replaced by fresh drafts from the country; a much greater number will be instructed in the use of arms, and will have been occasionally embodied together, than are actually employed, or than are supposed to be wanted, at the same time. Now what effects upon the civil condition of the country may be looked for from this general diffusion of the military character, becomes an inquiry of great importance and delicacy. To me it appears doubtful whether any government can be long secure,

where the people are acquainted with the use of arms, and accustomed to resort to them. Every faction will find itself at the head of an army; every disgust will excite commotion, and every commotion become a civil war. Nothing, perhaps, can govern a nation of armed citizens but that which governs an army,—despotism. I do not mean that a regular government would become despotic by training up its subjects to the knowledge and exercise of arms, but that it would ere long be forced to give way to despotism in some other shape; and that the country would be liable to what is even worse than a settled and constitutional despotism—to perpetual rebellions, and to perpetual revolutions; to short and violent usurpations; to the successive tyranny of governors, rendered cruel and jealous by the danger and instability of their situation.

The same purposes of strength and efficacy which make a standing army necessary at all, make it necessary in mixed governments, that this army be submitted to the management and direction of the prince: for however well a popular council may be qualified for the offices of legislation, it is altogether unfit for the conduct of war: in which, success usually depends upon vigour and enterprise; upon secrecy, dispatch, and unanimity; upon a quick perception of opportunities, and the power of seizing every opportunity immediately. It is likewise necessary that the obedience of an army be as prompt and active as possible; for which reason it ought to be made an obedience of will and emulation. Upon this consideration is founded the expediency of leaving to the prince not only the government and destination of the army, but the appointment and promotion of its officers: because a design is then alone likely to be executed with zeal and fidelity when the person who issues the order, chooses the instruments, and rewards the service. To which we may subjoin, that, in governments like ours, if the direction and *officering* of the army were placed in the hands of the democratic part of the constitution, this power, added to what they already possess, would so overbalance all that would be left of regal prerogative, that little would remain of monarchy in the constitution, but the name and expense; nor would these probably remain long.

Whilst we describe, however, the advantages of standing armies, we must not conceal the danger. These properties of their constitution,—the soldiery being separated in a great degree from the rest of the community, their being closely linked amongst themselves by habits of society and subordination, and the dependency of the whole chain upon the will and favour of the prince,—however essential they may be to the purposes for which armies are kept up, give them an aspect in no wise favourable to public liberty. The danger, however, is diminished, by maintaining, on all occasions, as much alliance of interest, and as much intercourse of sentiment, between the military part of the nation and the other orders of the people, as are consistent with the union and discipline of an army. For which purpose, officers of the army, upon whose disposition towards the commonwealth a great deal may depend, should be taken from the principal families of the country, and at the same time also be encouraged to establish in it families of their own, as well as be admitted to seats in the senate, to hereditary distinctions, and to all the civil honours and privileges that are compatible with their profession: which circumstances of connexion and situation will give them such a share in the general rights of the people, and so engage their inclinations on the side of public liberty, as to afford a reasonable security that they cannot be brought, by any promises of personal aggrandizement, to assist, in the execution of measures which might enslave their posterity, their kindred, and their country.

HORÆ PAULINÆ:

OR,

THE TRUTH

OF

THE SCRIPTURE HISTORY OF ST. PAUL EVINCED.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN LAW, D. D.

LORD BISHOP OF KILLALA AND ACHONRY,

As a testimony of esteem for his virtues and learning, and of gratitude for the long and faithful friendship with which the Author has been honoured by him, this attempt to confirm the Evidence of the Christian History is inscribed, by his affectionate and most obliged Servant,

W. PALEY.

CHAPTER I.

Exposition of the Argument.

The volume of Christian Scriptures contains thirteen letters purporting to be written by St Paul: it contains also a book, which, amongst other things, professes to deliver the history, or rather memoirs of the history, of this same person. By assuming the genuineness of the letters, we may prove the substantial truth of the history: or, by assuming the truth of the history, we may argue strongly in support of the genuineness of the letters. But I assume neither one nor the other. The reader is at liberty to suppose these writings to have been lately discovered in the library of the Escurial, and to come to our hands destitute of any extrinsic or collateral evidence whatever; and the argument I am about to offer is calculated to show, that a comparison of the different writings would, even under these circumstances, afford good reason to believe the persons and transactions to have been real, the letters authentic, and the narration in the main to be true.

Agreement or conformity between letters bearing the name of an ancient author, and a received history of that author's life, does not necessarily establish the credit of either; because,

1. The history may, like Middleton's Life of Cicero, or Jortin's Life of Erasmus, have been wholly, or in part, compiled from the letters; in which case it is manifest that the history adds nothing to the evidence already afforded by the letters; or,

2. The letters may have been fabricated out of the history; a species of imposture which is certainly practicable; and which, without any accession of proof or authority, would necessarily produce the appearance of consistency and agreement; or,

3. The history and letters may have been founded upon some authority common to both; as upon reports and traditions which prevailed in the age in which they were composed, or upon some ancient record now lost, which both writers consulted; in which case also, the letters, without being genuine, may exhibit marks of conformity with the history; and the history, without being true, may agree with the letters.

Agreement, therefore, or conformity, is only to be relied upon so far as we can exclude these several suppositions. Now the point to be noticed is, that in the three cases above enumerated, conformity must be the effect of *design*. Where the history is compiled from the letters, which is the first case, the design and composition of the work are in general so confessed, or made so evident by comparison, as to leave us in no danger of confounding the production with original history, or of mistaking it for an independent authority. The agreement, it is probable, will be close and uniform, and will easily be perceived to result from the intention of the author, and from the plan and conduct of his work.—Where the letters are fabricated from the history, which is the second case, it is always for the purpose of imposing a forgery upon the public; and in order to give colour and probability to the fraud, names, places, and circumstances, found in the history, may be studiously introduced into the letters, as well as a general consistency be endeavoured to be maintained. But here it is manifest that whatever congruity appears, is the consequence of meditation, artifice, and design.—The third case is that wherein the history and the letters, without any direct privity or communication with each other, derive their materials from the same source; and, by reason of their common original, furnish instances of accordance and correspondency. This is a situation

in which we must allow it to be possible for ancient writings to be placed; and it is a situation in which it is more difficult to distinguish spurious from genuine writings, than in either of the cases described in the preceding suppositions; inasmuch as the congruities observable are so far accidental, as that they are not produced by the immediate transplanting of names and circumstances out of one writing into the other. But although, with respect to each other, the agreement in these writings be mediate and secondary, yet it is not properly or absolutely undesigned: because, with respect to the common original from which the information of the writers proceeds, it is studied and factitious. The case of which we treat must, as to the letters, be a case of forgery: and when the writer who is personating another, sits down to his composition—whether he have the history with which we now compare the letters, or some other record before him; or whether he have only loose tradition and reports to go by—he must adapt his imposture, as well as he can, to what he finds in these accounts; and his adaptations will be the result of counsel, scheme, and industry: art must be employed; and vestiges will appear of management and design. Add to this, that, in most of the following examples, the circumstances in which the coincidence is remarked, are of too particular and domestic a nature, to have floated down upon the stream of general tradition.

Of the three cases which we have stated, the difference between the first and the two others is, that in the first the design may be fair and honest, in the others it must be accompanied with the consciousness of fraud; but in all there is design. In examining, therefore, the agreement between ancient writings, the character of truth and originality is undesignedness: and this test applies to every supposition; for, whether we suppose the history to be true, but the letters spurious; or, the letters to be genuine, but the history false; or, lastly, falsehood to belong to both—the history to be a fable, and the letters fictitious: the same inference will result—that either there will be no agreement between them, or the agreement will be the effect of design. Nor will it elude the principle of this rule, to suppose the same person to have been the author of all the letters, or even the author both of the letters and the history; for no less design is necessary to produce coincidence between different parts of a man's own writings, especially when they are made to take the different forms of a history and of original letters, than to adjust them to the circumstances found in any other writing.

With respect to those writings of the New Testament which are to be the subject of our present consideration, I think, that, as to the authenticity of the epistles, this argument, where it is sufficiently sustained by instances, is nearly conclusive; for I cannot assign a supposition of forgery, in which coincidences of the kind we inquire after are likely to appear. As to the history, it extends to these points:—It proves the general reality of the circumstances: it proves the historian's knowledge of these circumstances. In the present instance it confirms his pretensions of having been a contemporary, and in the latter part of his history, a companion, of St. Paul. In a word, it establishes the substantial truth of the narration; and *substantial* truth is that, which, in every historical inquiry, ought to be the first thing sought after and ascertained: it must be the groundwork of every other observation.

The reader then will please to remember this word *undesignedness*, as denoting that upon which the construction and validity of our argument chiefly depend.

As to the proofs of undesignedness, I shall in this place say little; for I had rather the reader's persuasion should arise from the instances themselves, and the separate remarks with which they may be accompanied, than from any previous formulary or description of argument. In a great plurality of examples, I trust he will be perfectly convinced that no design or contrivance whatever has been exercised: and if some of the coincidences alleged appear to be minute, circuitous, or oblique, let him reflect that this very indirectness and subtility is that which gives force and propriety to the example. Broad, obvious, and explicit agreements prove little; because it may be suggested that the insertion of such is the ordinary expedient of every forgery: and though they may occur, and probably will occur in genuine writings, yet it cannot be proved that they are peculiar to these. Thus what St. Paul declares in chap. xi. of 1 Cor. concerning the institution of the eucharist—"For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me"—though it be in close and verbal conformity with the account of the same transaction preserved by St. Luke, is yet a conformity of which no use can be made in our argument; for if it should be objected that this was a mere recital from the gospel, borrowed by the author of the epistle, for the purpose of setting off his composition by an appearance of agreement with the received account of the Lord's supper, I should not know how to repel the insinuation. In like manner, the description which St. Paul gives of himself in his epistle to the Philippians (iii. 5.)—"Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless"—is made up of particulars so plainly delivered concerning him, in the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, and the Epistle to the Galatians, that I cannot deny but that it would be easy for an impostor, who was fabricating a letter in the name of St. Paul, to collect these articles into one view. This, therefore, is a conformity which we do not adduce. But when I read in the Acts of the Apostles, that when "Paul came to Derbe and Lystra, behold a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman *which was a jewess;*" and when, in an epistle addressed to Timothy, I find him reminded of his "having known the Holy Scriptures *from a child;*" which implies that he must, on one side or both, have been brought up by Jewish parents: I conceive that I remark a coincidence which shows, by its very *obliquity*, that scheme was not employed in its formation. In like manner, if a coincidence depend upon a comparison of dates, or rather of circumstances from which the dates are gathered—the more intricate that comparison shall be; the more numerous the intermediate steps through which the conclusion

is deduced; in a word, the more *circuitous* the investigation is, the better, because the agreement which finally results is thereby farther removed from the suspicion of contrivance, affectation, or design. And it should be remembered, concerning these coincidences, that it is one thing to be minute, and another to be precarious; one thing to be unobserved, and another to be obscure; one thing to be circuitous or oblique, and another to be forced, dubious, or fanciful. And this distinction ought always to be retained in our thoughts.

The very particularity of St. Paul's epistles; the perpetual recurrence of names of persons and places; the frequent allusions to the incidents of his private life, and the circumstances of his condition and history; and the connexion and parallelism of these with the same circumstances in the Acts of the Apostles, so as to enable us, for the most part, to confront them one with another; as well as the relation which subsists between the circumstances, as mentioned or referred to in the different Epistles—afford no inconsiderable proof of the genuiness of the writings, and the reality of the transactions. For as no advertency is sufficient to guard against slips and contradictions, when circumstances are multiplied, and when they are liable to be detected by contemporary accounts equally circumstantial, an impostor, I should expect, would either have avoided particulars entirely, contenting himself with doctrinal discussions, moral precepts, and general reflections; * or if, for the sake of imitating St. Paul's style, he should have thought it necessary to intersperse his composition with names and circumstances, he would have placed them out of the reach of comparison with the history. And I am confirmed in this opinion by the inspection of two attempts to counterfeit St. Paul's epistles, which have come down to us; and the only attempts of which we have any knowledge, that are at all deserving of regard. One of these is an epistle to the Laodiceans, extant in Latin, and preserved by Fabricius, in his collection of apocryphal scriptures. The other purports to be an epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, in answer to an epistle from the Corinthians to him. This was translated by Scroderus from a copy in the Arminian language which had been sent to W. Whiston, and was afterwards, from a more perfect copy procured at Aleppo, published by his sons, as an appendix to their edition of Moses Chorenensis. No Greek copy exists of either: they are not only not supported by ancient testimony, but they are negatived and excluded; as they have never found admission into any catalogue of apostolical writings, acknowledged by, or known to, the early ages of Christianity. In the first of these I found, as I expected, a total *evitation* of circumstances. It is simply a collection of sentences from the canonical epistles, strung together with very little skill. The second, which is a more versute and specious forgery, is introduced with a list of names of persons who wrote to St. Paul from Corinth; and is preceded by an account sufficiently particular of the manner in which the epistle was sent from Corinth to St. Paul, and the answer returned. But they are names which no one ever heard of; and the account it is impossible to combine with any thing found in the Acts, or in the other epistles. It is not necessary for me to point out the internal marks of spuriousness and imposture which these compositions betray; but it was necessary to observe, that they do not afford those coincidences which we propose as proofs of authenticity in the epistles which we defend.

Having explained the general scheme and formation of the argument, I may be permitted to subjoin a brief account of the manner of conducting it.

I have disposed the several instances of agreement under separate numbers: as well to mark more sensibly the divisions of the subject, as for another purpose, viz: that the reader may thereby be reminded that the instances are independent of one another. I have advanced nothing which I did not think probable; but the degree of probability by which different instances are supported, is undoubtedly very different. If the reader, therefore, meets with a number which contains an instance that appears to him unsatisfactory, or founded in mistake, he will dismiss that number from the argument, but without prejudice to any other. He will have occasion also to observe that the coincidences discoverable in some epistles are much fewer and weaker than what are supplied by others. But he will add to his observation this important circumstance—that whatever ascertains the original of one epistle, in some measure establishes the authority of the rest. For, whether these epistles be genuine or spurious, every thing about them indicates that they come from the same hand. The diction, which it is extremely difficult to imitate, preserves its resemblance and peculiarity throughout all the epistles. Numerous expressions and singularities of style, found in no other part of the New Testament, are repeated in different epistles; and occur in their respective places, without the smallest appearance of force or art. An involved argumentation, frequent obscurities, especially in the order and transition of thought, piety, vehemence, affection, bursts of rapture, and of unparalleled sublimity, are properties, all or most of them, discernible in every letter of the collection. But although these epistles bear strong marks of proceeding from the same hand, I think it is still more certain that they were originally separate publications. They form no continued story; they compose no regular correspondence; they comprise not the transactions of any particular period; they carry on no connexion of argument; they depend not upon one another; except in one or two instances, they refer not to one another. I will farther undertake to say, that no study or care has been employed to produce or preserve an appearance of consistency amongst them. All which observations show that they were not intended by the person, whoever he was, that wrote them, to come forth or be read together: that they appeared at first separately, and have been collected since.

The proper purpose of the following work is to

* This, however, must not be misunderstood. A person writing to his friends, and upon a subject in which the transactions of his own life were concerned, would probably be led, in the course of his letter, especially if it was a long one, to refer to passages found in his history. A person addressing an epistle to the public at large, or under the form of an epistle delivering a discourse upon some speculative argument, would not, it is probable, meet with an occasion of alluding to the circumstances of his life at all; he might, or he might not; the chance on either side is nearly equal. This is the situation of the catholic epistle. Although, therefore, the presence of these allusions and agreements be a valuable accession to the arguments by which the authenticity of a letter is maintained, yet the want of them certainly forms no positive objection.

bring together, from the Acts of the Apostles, and from the different epistles, such passages as furnish examples of undesigned coincidence; but I have so far enlarged upon this plan, as to take into it some circumstances found in the epistles, which contributed strength to the conclusion, though not strictly objects of comparison.

It appeared also a part of the same plan, to examine the difficulties which presented themselves in the course of our inquiry.

I do not know that the subject has been proposed or considered in this view before. Ludovicus, Capellus, Bishop Pearson, Dr. Benson, and Dr. Lardner, have each given a continued history of St. Paul's life, made up from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles joined together. But this, it is manifest, is a different undertaking from the present, and directed to a different purpose.

If what is here offered shall add one thread to that complication of probabilities by which the Christian history is attested, the reader's attention will be repaid by the supreme importance of the subject; and my design will be fully answered.

CHAPTER II.

The Epistle to the Romans.

No. I.

The first passage I shall produce from this epistle, and upon which a good deal of observation will be founded, is the following:—

"But now I go unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints; for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem."—Rom. xv. 25, 26.

In this quotation three distinct circumstances are stated—a contribution in Macedonia for the relief of the Christians of Jerusalem, a contribution in Achaia for the same purpose, and an intended journey of St. Paul to Jerusalem. These circumstances are stated as taking place at the same time, and that to be the time when the epistle was written. Now let us inquire whether we can find these circumstances elsewhere, and whether, if we do find them, they meet together in respect of date. Turn to the Acts of the Apostles, chap. xx. ver. 2, 3, and you read the following account: "When he had gone over those parts, (viz. Macedonia,) and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and there abode three months; and when the Jews laid wait for him, *as he was about to sail into Syria*, he proposed to return through Macedonia." From this passage, compared with the account of St. Paul's travels given before, and from the sequel of the chapter, it appears that upon St. Paul's *second* visit to the peninsula of Greece, his intention was, when he should leave the country, to proceed from Achaia directly by sea to Syria; but that to avoid the Jews, who were lying in wait to intercept him in his route, he so far changed his purpose as to go back through Macedonia, embark at Philippi, and pursue his voyage from thence towards Jerusalem. Here, therefore, is a journey to Jerusalem; but not a syllable of any contribution. And as St. Paul had taken several journeys to Jerusalem before, and one also immediately after his *first* visit into the peninsula of Greece, (Acts xviii, 21,) it cannot from hence be collected in which of these visits the epistle was written, or with certainty, that it was written in either. The silence of the historian, who professes to have been with St. Paul at the time, (c. xx. v. 6,) concerning any contribution, might lead us to look out for some different journey, or might induce us, perhaps, to question the consistency of the two records, did not a very accidental reference, in another part of the same history, afford us sufficient ground to believe that this silence was omission. When St. Paul made his reply before Felix, to the accusations of Tertullus, he alleged, as was natural, that neither the errand which brought him to Jerusalem, nor his conduct whilst he remained there, merited the calumnies with which the Jews had aspersed him. "Now after many years (i. e. of absence,) *I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings;* whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult, who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had aught against me." Acts xxiv. 17—19. This mention of alms and offerings certainly brings the narrative in the Acts near to an accordancy with the epistle; yet no one, I am persuaded, will suspect that this clause was put into St. Paul's defence, either to supply the omission in the preceding narrative, or with any view to such accordancy.

After all, nothing is yet said or hinted, concerning the *place* of the contribution; nothing concerning Macedonia and Achaia. Turn therefore to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xvi. ver. 1—4, and you have St. Paul delivering the following directions: "Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye; upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever you shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem; and if it be meet, that I go also, they shall go with me." In this passage we find a contribution carrying on at Corinth, the capital of Achaia, for the Christians of Jerusalem; we find also a hint given of the possibility of St. Paul going up to Jerusalem himself, after he had paid his visit into Achaia: but this is spoken of rather as a possibility than as any settled intention; for his first thought was, "Whomsoever you shall approve by your letters, them will I *send* to bring your liberality to Jerusalem:" and in the sixth verse he adds, "that ye may bring me on my journey *whithersoever* I go." This epistle purports to be written after St. Paul had been at Corinth: for it refers throughout to what he had done and said amongst them whilst he was there. The expression, therefore, "when I come," must relate to a *second* visit; against which visit the contribution spoken of was desired to be in readiness.

But though the contribution in Achaia be expressly mentioned, nothing is here said concerning any contribution in Macedonia. Turn, therefore, in the third place, to the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. viii. ver. 1—4, and you will discover the particular which remains to be sought for: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to

wit of the grace of God bestowed on the *churches of Macedonia;* how that, in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality: for to their power, I bear record, yea and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves: praying us with much entreaty, that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints." To which add, chap. ix. ver. 2: "I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago." In this epistle we find St. Paul advanced as far as Macedonia, upon that *second* visit to Corinth which he promised in his former epistle; we find also, in the passages now quoted from it, that a contribution was going on in Macedonia at the same time with, or soon however following, the contribution which was made in Achaia; but for whom the contribution was made does not appear in this epistle at all: that information must be supplied from the first epistle.

Here, therefore, at length, but fetched from three different writings, we have obtained the several circumstances we inquired after, and which the Epistle to the Romans brings together, viz. a contribution in Achaia for the Christians of Jerusalem; a contribution in Macedonia for the same; and an approaching journey of St. Paul to Jerusalem. We have these circumstances—each by some hint in the passage in which it is mentioned, or by the date of the writing in which the passage occurs—fixed to a particular time; and we have that time turning out upon examination to be in all the *same:* namely towards the close of St. Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece. This is an instance of conformity beyond the possibility, I will venture to say, of random writing to produce. I also assert, that it is in the highest degree improbable that it should have been the effect of contrivance and design. The imputation of *design* amounts to this: that the forger of the Epistle to the Romans inserted in it the passage upon which our observations are founded, for the purpose of giving colour to his forgery by the appearance of conformity with other writings which were then extant. I reply, in the first place, that, if he did this to countenance his forgery, he did it for the purpose of an argument which would not strike one reader in ten thousand. Coincidences so circuitous as this, answer not the ends of forgery; are seldom, I believe, attempted by it. In the second place, I observe, that he must have had the Acts of the Apostles, and the two epistles to the Corinthians, before him at the time. In the Acts of the Apostles (I mean that part of the Acts which relate to this period,) he would have found the journey to Jerusalem; but nothing about the contribution. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians he would have found a contribution going on in Achaia for the Christians of Jerusalem, and a distant hint of the possibility of the journey; but nothing concerning a contribution in Macedonia. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians he would have found a contribution in Macedonia accompanying that in Achaia; but no intimation for whom either was intended, and not a word about the journey. It was only by a close and attentive collation of the three writings, that he could have picked out the circumstances which he has united in his epistle; and by a still more nice examination, that he could have determined them to belong to the same period. In the third place, I remark, what diminishes very much the suspicion of fraud, how aptly and connectedly the mention of the circumstances in question, viz. the journey to Jerusalem, and of the occasion of that journey, arises from the context, "Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. *But now I go unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints; for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.* It hath pleased them verily, and their debtors they are; for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed them to this fruit, I will come by you into Spain." Is the passage in *Italics* like a passage foisted in for an extraneous purpose? Does it not arise from what goes before, by a junction as easy as any example of writing upon real business can furnish? Could any thing be more natural than that St. Paul, in writing to the Romans, should speak of the time when he hoped to visit them; should mention the business which then detained him; and that he purposed to set forwards upon his journey to them when that business was completed?

No. II.

By means of the quotation which formed the subject of the preceding number, we collect that the Epistle to the Romans was written at the conclusion of St. Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece; but this we collect, not from the epistle itself, nor from any thing *declared* concerning the time and place in any part of the epistle, but from a comparison of circumstances referred to in the epistle, with the order of events recorded in the Acts, and with references to the same circumstances, though for quite different purposes, in the two epistles to the Corinthians. Now would the author of a forgery, who sought to gain credit to a spurious letter by congruities, depending upon the time and place in which the letter was supposed to be written, have left that time and place to be made out, in a manner so obscure and indirect as this is? If therefore coincidences of circumstances can be pointed out in this epistle, depending upon its date, or the place where it was written, whilst that date and place are only ascertained by other circumstances, such coincidences may fairly be stated as *undesigned.* Under this head I adduce

Chap. xvi. 21—23: "Timotheus, my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you. I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord. Gaius, mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you; and Quartus, a brother." With this passage I compare, Acts xx. 4: "And there accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berea; and, of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and, of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus." The Epistle to the Romans, we have seen, was written just before St. Paul's departure from Greece, after his second visit to that peninsula: the persons mentioned in the

quotation from the Acts are those who accompanied him in that departure. Of seven whose names are joined in the salutation of the church of Rome, three, viz. Sosipater, Gaius, and Timothy, are proved, by this passage in the Acts, to have been with St. Paul at the time. And this is perhaps as much coincidence as could be expected, from reality, though less, I am apt to think, than would have been produced by design. Four are mentioned in the Acts who are not joined in the salutation; and it is in the nature of the case probable that there should be many attending St. Paul in Greece, who knew nothing of the converts at Rome, nor were known by them. In like manner, several are joined in the salutation who are not mentioned in the passage referred to in the Acts. This also was to be expected. The occasion of mentioning them in the Acts was their proceeding with St. Paul upon his journey. But we may be sure that there were many eminent Christians with St. Paul in Greece, besides those who accompanied him into Asia.*

But if any one shall still contend that a forger of the epistle, with the Acts of the Apostles before him, and having settled this scheme of writing a letter as from St. Paul, upon his second visit into Greece, would easily think of the expedient of putting in the names of those persons who appeared to be with St. Paul at the time as an obvious recommendation of the imposture: I then repeat my observations; first, that he would have made the catalogue more complete; and, secondly, that with this contrivance in his thoughts, it was certainly his business, in order to avail himself of the artifice, to have stated in the body of the epistle, that Paul was in Greece when he wrote it, and that he was there upon his second visit. Neither of which he has done, either directly, or even so as to be discoverable by any circumstance found in the narrative delivered in the Acts.

Under the same head, viz. of coincidences depending upon date, I cite from the epistle the following salutation: "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Jesus Christ, who have for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles."—Chap. xvi. 3. It appears, from the Acts of the Apostles, that Priscilla and Aquila had originally been inhabitants of Rome; for we read, Acts xviii. 2, that "Paul found a certain Jew, named Aquila, lately come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from *Rome*." They were connected, therefore, with the place to which the salutations are sent. That is one coincidence; another is the following: St. Paul became acquainted with these persons at Corinth during his first return into Greece. They accompanied him upon his visit into Asia; were settled for some time at Ephesus, Acts xviii. 19—26, and appear to have been with St. Paul when he wrote from that place his First Epistle to the Corinthians, I Cor. xvi. 19. Not long after the writing of which epistle St. Paul went from Ephesus into Macedonia, and, "after he had gone over those parts," proceeded from thence upon his second visit into Greece; during which visit, or rather at the conclusion of it, the Epistle to the Romans, as hath been shown, was written. We have therefore the time of St. Paul's residence at Ephesus after he had written to the Corinthians, the time taken up by his progress through Macedonia, (which is indefinite, and was probably considerable,) and his three months' abode in Greece; we have the sum of those three periods allowed for Aquila and Priscilla going back to Rome, so as to be there when the epistle before us was written. Now what this quotation leads us to observe is, the danger of scattering names and circumstances in writings like the present, how implicated they often are with dates and places, and that nothing but truth can preserve consistency. Had the notes of time in the Epistle to the Romans fixed the writing of it to any date prior to St. Paul's first residence at Corinth, the salutation of Aquila and Priscilla would have contradicted the history, because it would have been prior to his acquaintance with these persons. If the notes of time had fixed it to any period during *that* residence at Corinth, during his journey to Jerusalem when he first returned out of Greece, during his stay at Antioch, whither he went down to Jerusalem, or during his second progress through the Lesser Asia, upon which he proceeded from Antioch, an equal contradiction would have been incurred; because from Acts xviii. 2—18, 19—26, it appears that during all this time Aquila and Priscilla were either along with St. Paul, or were abiding at Ephesus. Lastly, had the notes of time in this epistle, which we have seen to be perfectly incidental, compared with the notes of time in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, which are equally incidental, fixed this epistle to be either contemporary with that, or prior to it, a similar contradiction would have ensued; because, first, when the Epistle to the Corinthians was written, Aquila and Priscilla were along with St. Paul, as they joined in the salutation of that church, I Cor. xvi. 19; and because, secondly, the history does not allow us to suppose, that between the time of their becoming acquainted with St. Paul and the time of St. Paul's writing to the Corinthians, Aquila and Priscilla could have gone to Rome, so as to have been saluted in an epistle to that city; and then come back to St. Paul at Ephesus, so as to be joined with him in saluting the church of Corinth. As it is, all things are consistent. The Epistle to the Romans is posterior even to the Second Epistle to the Corinthians; because it speaks of a contribution in Achaia being completed, which the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. viii, is only soliciting. It is sufficiently therefore posterior

* Of these Jason is one, whose presence upon this occasion is very naturally accounted for. Jason was an inhabitant of Thessalonica in Macedonia, and entertained St. Paul in his house upon his first visit to that country.—Acts xvii. 7. St. Paul, upon this his second visit, passed through Macedonia on his way to Greece, and, from the situation of Thessalonica, most likely through that city. It appears, from various instances in the Acts, to have been the practice of many converts, to attend St. Paul from place to place. It is therefore highly probable, I mean that it is highly consistent with the account in the history, that Jason, according to that account a zealous disciple, the inhabitant of a city at no great distance from Greece, and through which, as it should seem, St. Paul had lately passed, should have accompanied St. Paul into Greece, and have been with him there at this time. Lucius is another name in the epistle. A very slight alteration would convert Λουκιος into Λουκας, Lucius into Luke, which would produce an additional coincidence: for, if Luke was the author of the history, he was with St. Paul at the time: inasmuch as, describing the voyage which took place soon after the writing of this epistle, the historian uses the first person—"*We* sailed away from Philippi." Acts xx. 6.

to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, to allow time in the interval for Aquila and Priscilla's return from Ephesus to Rome.

Before we dismiss these two persons, we may take notice of the terms of commendation in which St. Paul describes them, and of the agreement of that encomium with the history. "My helpers in Christ Jesus, who have for my life laid down their necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles." In the eighteenth chapter of the Acts, we are informed that Aquila and Priscilla were Jews; that St. Paul first met with them at Corinth; that for some time he abode in the same house with them; that St. Paul's contention at Corinth was with the unbelieving Jews, who at first "opposed and blasphemed, and afterwards with one accord raised an insurrection against him;" that Aquila and Priscilla adhered, we may conclude, to St. Paul throughout this whole contest; for, when he left the city, they went with him, Acts xviii. 18. Under these circumstances, it is highly probable that they should be involved in the dangers and persecutions which St. Paul underwent from the Jews, being themselves Jews; and, by adhering to St. Paul in this dispute, deserters, as they would be accounted, of the Jewish cause. Farther, as they, though Jews, were assisting to St. Paul in preaching to the Gentiles at Corinth, they had taken a decided part in the great controversy of that day, the admission of the Gentiles to a parity of religious situation with the Jews. For this conduct alone, if there was no other reason, they may seem to have been entitled to "thanks from the churches of the Gentiles." They were Jews taking part with Gentiles. Yet is all this so indirectly intimated, or rather so much of it left to inference, in the account given in the Acts, that I do not think it probable that a forger either could or would have drawn his representation from thence; and still less probable do I think it, that, without having seen the Acts, he could, by mere accident and without truth for his guide, have delivered a representation so conformable to the circumstances there recorded.

The two congruities last adduced, depended upon the time, the two following regard the place, of the epistle.

1. Chap. xvi. 23. "Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, saluteth you"—of what city? We have seen, that is, we have inferred from circumstances found in the epistle, compared with circumstances found in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the two epistles to the Corinthians, that our epistle was written during St. Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece. Again, as St. Paul, in his epistle to the church of Corinth, I Cor. xvi. 3, speaks of a collection going on in that city, and of his desire that it might be ready against he came thither; and as in this epistle he speaks of that collection being ready, it follows that the epistle was written either whilst he was at Corinth, or after he had been there. Thirdly, since St. Paul speaks in this epistle of his journey to Jerusalem, as about instantly to take place; and as we learn, Acts xx. 3, that his design and attempt was to sail upon that journey immediately from Greece, properly so called, *i. e.* as distinguished from Macedonia; it is probable that he was in this country when he wrote the epistle, in which he speaks of himself as upon the eve of setting out. If in Greece, he was most likely at Corinth; for the two Epistles to the Corinthians show that the principal end of his coming into Greece, was to visit that city, where he had founded a church. Certainly we know no place in Greece in which his presence was so probable; at least, the placing of him at Corinth satisfies every circumstance. Now that Erastus was an inhabitant of Corinth, or had some connexion with Corinth, is rendered a fair subject of presumption, by that which is accidentally said of him in the Second Epistle to Timothy, chap. iii. 20. "Erastus abode at *Corinth*." St. Paul complains of his solitude, and is telling Timothy what was become of his companions: "Erastus abode at Corinth; but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." Erastus was one of those who had attended St. Paul in his travels, Acts xix. 22: and when those travels had, upon some occasion, brought our apostle and his train to Corinth, Erastus staid there, for no reason so probable, as that it was his home. I allow that this coincidence, is not so precise as some others, yet I think it too clear to be produced by accident: for, of the many places, which this same epistle has assigned to different persons, and the innumerable others which it might have mentioned, how came it to fix upon Corinth for Erastus? And, as far as it is a coincidence, it is certainly undesigned on the part of the author of the Epistle to the Romans: because he has not told us of what city Erastus was the chamberlain; or, which is the same thing, from what city the epistle was written, the setting forth of which was absolutely necessary to the display of the coincidence, if any such display had been thought of: nor could the author of the Epistle to Timothy leave Erastus at Corinth, from any thing he might have read in the Epistle to the Romans, because Corinth is nowhere in that epistle mentioned either by name or description.

2. Chap. xvi. 1—3. "I commend unto you Phœbe, our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also." Cenchrea adjoined to Corinth; St. Paul therefore, at the time of writing the letter, was in the neighbourhood of the woman whom he thus recommends. But, farther, that St. Paul had before this been at Cenchrea itself, appears from the eighteenth chapter of the Acts; and appears by a circumstance as incidental, and as unlike design, as any that can be imagined. "Paul after this tarried there (viz. at Corinth,) yet a good while, and then took his leave of his brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shorn his head *in Cenchrea*, for he had a vow." xviii. 18. The shaving of the head denoted the expiration of the Nazaritic vow. The historian, therefore, by the mention of this circumstance, virtually tells us that St. Paul's vow was expired before he set forward upon his voyage, having deferred probably his departure until he should be released from the restrictions under which his vow laid him. Shall we say that the author of the Acts of the Apostles feigned this anecdote of St. Paul at Cenchrea, because he had read in the Epistle to the Romans that "Phœbe, a servant of the church of Cenchrea, had been a succourer of many, and of him also?" or shall we say that the author of the Epistle to the Romans, out of his own imagination, created

Phœbe "*a servant of the church at Cenchrea,*" because he read in the Acts of the Apostles that Paul had "shorn his head" in that place?

No. III.

Chap. i. 13. "Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that *oftentimes I purposed to come unto you,* but was let hitherto, that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles." Again, xv. 23, 24: "But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years (πολλῶν, oftentimes,) to come unto you, whensoever I take my journey into Spain I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you: but now I go up unto Jerusalem to minister to the saints. When, therefore, I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain."

With these passages compare Acts xix. 21. "After these things were ended, (viz. at Ephesus,) Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem; saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Let it be observed that our epistle purports to have been written at the conclusion of St. Paul's second journey into Greece: that the quotation from the Acts contains words said to have been spoken by St. Paul at Ephesus, some time before he set forwards upon that journey. Now I contend that it is impossible that two independent fictions should have attributed to St. Paul the same purpose, especially a purpose so specific and particular as this, which was not merely a general design of visiting Rome after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, and after he had performed a voyage from these countries to Jerusalem. The conformity between the history and the epistle is perfect. In the first quotation from the epistle, we find that a design of visiting Rome had long dwelt in the apostle's mind: in the quotation from the Acts, we find that design expressed a considerable time before the epistle was written. In the history, we find that the plan which St. Paul had formed was, to pass through Macedonia and Achaia; after that to go to Jerusalem; and when he had finished his visit there, to sail for Rome. When the epistle was written, he had executed so much of his plan, as to have passed through Macedonia and Achaia; and was preparing to pursue the remainder of it, by speedily setting out towards Jerusalem: and in this point of his travels he tells his friends at Rome, that, when he had completed the business which carried him to Jerusalem, he would come to them. Secondly, I say, that the very inspection of the passages will satisfy us that they were not made up from one another.

"Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you; but now I go up to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. When, therefore, I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain."—This from the epistle.

"Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem: saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome."—This from the Acts.

If the passage in the epistle was taken from that in the Acts, why was *Spain* put in? If the passage in the Acts was taken from that in the epistle, why was *Spain* left out? If the two passages were unknown to each other, nothing can account for their conformity but truth. Whether we suppose the history and the epistle to be alike fictitious, or the history to be true but the letter spurious, or the letter to be genuine but the history a fable, the meeting with this circumstance in both, if neither borrowed it from the other, is upon all these suppositions equally inexplicable.

No. IV.

The following quotation I offer for the purpose of pointing out a geographical coincidence, of so much importance, that Dr. Lardner considered it as a confirmation of the whole history of St. Paul's travels.

Chap. xv. 19. "So that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ."

I do not think that these words necessarily import that St. Paul had penetrated into Illyricum, or preached the Gospel in that province; but rather that he had come to the confines of Illyricum, (μεχρι της Ιλλυρικου,) and that these confines were the external boundary of his travels. St. Paul considers Jerusalem as the centre, and is here viewing the circumference to which his travels extended. The form of expression in the original conveys this idea—απο Ιερουσαλημ και κυκλω μεχρι του Ιλλυρικου. Illyricum was the part of this circle which he mentions in an epistle to the Romans, because it lay in a direction from Jerusalem towards that city, and pointed out to the Roman readers the nearest place to them, to which his travels from Jerusalem had brought him. The name of Illyricum nowhere occurs in the Acts of the Apostles; no suspicion, therefore can be received that the mention of it was borrowed from thence. Yet I think it appears, from these same Acts, that St. Paul, before the time when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans, had reached the confines of Illyricum; or, however, that he might have done so, in perfect consistency with the account there delivered. Illyricum adjoins upon Macedonia; measuring from Jerusalem towards Rome, it lies close behind it. If, therefore, St. Paul traversed the whole country of Macedonia, the route would necessarily bring him to the confines of Illyricum, and these confines would be described as the extremity of his journey. Now the account of St. Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece, is contained in these words: "He departed for to go into Macedonia; *and when he had gone over these parts,* and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece." Acts xx. 2. This account allows, or rather leads us to suppose, that St. Paul, in going over Macedonia (διελθων τα μερη εκεινα,) had passed so far to the west, as to come into those parts of the country which were contiguous to Illyricum, if he did not enter into Illyricum itself. The history, therefore, and the epistle so far agree, and the agreement is much strengthened by a coincidence of *time.* At the time the epistle was written, St. Paul might say, in conformity with the history, that he had "come into Illyricum;" much before that time, he could not have said so; for, upon his former journey to Macedonia, his route

is laid down from the time of his landing at Philippi to his sailing from Corinth. We trace him from Philippi to Amphipolis and Apollonia; from thence to Thessalonica; from Thessalonica to Berea; from Berea to Athens; and from Athens to Corinth: which tract confines him to the eastern side of the peninsula, and therefore keeps him all the while at a considerable distance from Illyricum. Upon his second visit to Macedonia, the history, we have seen, leaves him at liberty. It must have been, therefore, upon that second visit, if at all, that he approached Illyricum; and this visit, we know, almost immediately preceded the writing of the epistle. It was natural that the apostle should refer to a journey which was fresh in his thoughts.

No. V.

Chap. xv. 30. "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe, in Judæa."—With this compare Acts xx. 22, 23:

"And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me."

Let it be remarked, that it is the same journey to Jerusalem which is spoken of in these two passages; that the epistle was written immediately before St. Paul set forwards upon this journey from Achaia; that the words in the Acts were uttered by him when he had proceeded in that journey as far as Miletus, in Lesser Asia. This being remembered, I observe that the two passages, without any resemblance between them that could induce us to suspect that they were borrowed from one another, represent the state of St. Paul's mind, with respect to the event of the journey, in terms of substantial agreement. They both express his sense of danger in the approaching visit to Jerusalem: they both express the doubt which dwelt upon his thoughts concerning what might there befall him. When, in his epistle, he entreats the Roman Christians, "for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, to strive together with him in their prayers to God for him, that he might be delivered from them which do not believe, in Judæa," he sufficiently confesses his fears. In the Acts of the Apostles we see in him the same apprehensions, and the same uncertainty: "I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, *not knowing* the things that shall befall me there." The only difference is, that in the history his thoughts are more inclined to despondency than in the epistle. In the epistle he retains his hope "that he should come unto them with joy by the will of God:" in the history, his mind yields to the reflection, "that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and afflictions awaited him." Now that his fears should be greater, and his hopes less, in this stage of his journey than when he wrote his epistle, that is, when he first set out upon it, is no other alteration than might well be expected; since those prophetic intimations to which he refers, when he says, "the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city," had probably been received by him in the course of his journey, and were probably similar to what we know he received in the remaining part of it at Tyre, xxi. 4; and afterwards from Agabus at Cæsarea, xxi. 11.

No. VI.

There is another strong remark arising from the same passage in the epistle; to make which understood, it will be necessary to state the passage over again, and somewhat more at length.

"I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe, in Judæa—that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed."

I desire the reader to call to mind *that* part of St. Paul's history which took place after his arrival at Jerusalem, and which employs the seven last chapters of the Acts; and I build upon it this observation—that supposing the Epistle to the Romans to have been a forgery, and the author of the forgery to have had the Acts of the Apostles before him, and to have there seen that St. Paul, in fact, "was *not* delivered from the unbelieving Jews," but on the contrary, that he was taken into custody at Jerusalem, and brought to Rome a prisoner—it is next to impossible that he should have made St. Paul express expectations so contrary to what he saw had been the event; and utter prayers, with apparent hopes of success, which he must have known were frustrated in the issue.

This single consideration convinces me, that no concert or confederacy whatever subsisted between the Epistle and the Acts of the Apostles; and that whatever coincidences have been or can be pointed out between them, are unsophisticated, and are the result of truth and reality.

It also convinces me that the epistle was written not only in St. Paul's life-time, but before he arrived at Jerusalem; for the important events relating to him which took place after his arrival at that city, must have been known to the Christian community soon after they happened: they form the most public part of his history. But had they been known to the author of the epistle—in other words, had they then taken place—the passage which we have quoted from the epistle would not have been found there.

No. VII.

I now proceed to state the conformity which exists between the argument of this epistle and the history of its reputed author. It is enough for this purpose to observe, that the object of the epistle, that is, of the argumentative part of it, was to place the Gentile convert upon a parity of situation with the Jewish, in respect of his religious condition, and his rank in the divine favour. The epistle supports this point by a variety of arguments; such as, that no man of either description was justified by the works of the law—for this plain reason, that no man had performed them; that it became therefore necessary to appoint another medium or condition of justification, in which new medium the Jewish peculiarity was merged and lost; that Abraham's own justification was anterior to the law, and independent of it: that the Jewish converts were to consider the law as now dead, and themselves as married to another; that what the law in truth could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God had

done by sending his Son; that God had rejected the unbelieving Jews, and had substituted in their place a society of believers in Christ, collected indifferently from Jews and Gentiles. Soon after the writing of this epistle, St. Paul, agreeably to the intention intimated in the epistle itself, took his journey to Jerusalem. The day after he arrived there, he was introduced to the church. What passed at this interview is thus related, Acts xxi. 19: "When he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry: and when they heard it, they glorified the Lord: and said unto him, thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law; and they *are informed of thee*, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." St. Paul disclaimed the charge: but there must have been something to have led to it. Now it is only to suppose that St. Paul openly professed the principles which the epistle contains; that, in the course of his ministry, he had uttered the sentiments which he is here made to write: and the matter is accounted for. Concerning the accusation which public rumour had brought against him to Jerusalem, I will not say that it was just; but I will say, that if he was the author of the epistle before us, and if his preaching was consistent with his writing, it was extremely natural: for though it be not a necessary, surely it is an easy inference, that if the Gentile convert, who did not observe the law of Moses, held as advantageous a situation in his religious interests as the Jewish convert who did, there could be no strong reason for observing that law at all. The remonstrance therefore of the church of Jerusalem, and the report which occasioned it, were founded in no very violent misconstruction of the apostle's doctrine. His reception at Jerusalem was exactly what I should have expected the author of this epistle to have met with. I am entitled therefore to argue, that a separate narrative of effects experienced by St. Paul, similar to what a person might be expected to experience who held the doctrines advanced in this epistle, forms a proof that he did hold these doctrines; and that the epistle bearing his name, in which such doctrines are laid down, actually proceeded from him.

No. VIII.

This number is supplemental to the former. I propose to point out in it two particulars in the conduct of the argument, perfectly adapted to the historical circumstances under which the epistle was written; which yet are free from all appearance of contrivance, and which it would not, I think, have entered into the mind of a sophist to contrive.

I. The Epistle to the Galatians relates to the same general question as the Epistle to the Romans. St. Paul had founded the church of Galatia; at Rome, he had never been. Observe now a difference in his manner of treating of the same subject, corresponding with this difference in his situation. In the Epistle to the Galatians he puts the point in a great measure upon *authority*: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel."—Gal. i. 6. "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, is not after man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."—ch. i. 11, 12. "I am afraid, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."—iv. 11, 12. "I desire to be present with you now, for I stand in doubt of you."—iv. 20. "Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."—v. 2. "This persuasion cometh not of him that called you."—v. 8. This is the style in which he accosts the Galatians. In the epistle to the converts of Rome, where his authority was not established, nor his person known, he puts the same points entirely upon *argument*. The perusal of the epistle will prove this to the satisfaction of every reader: and, as the observation relates to the whole contents of the epistle, I forbear adducing separate extracts. I repeat, therefore, that we have pointed out a distinction in the two epistles, suited to the relation in which the author stood to his different correspondents.

Another adaptation, and somewhat of the same kind, is the following:

2. The Jews, we know, were very numerous at Rome, and probably formed a principal part amongst the new converts; so much so, that the Christians seem to have been known at Rome rather as a denomination of Jews, than as any thing else. In an epistle consequently to the Roman believers, the point to be endeavoured after by St. Paul was to reconcile the *Jewish* converts to the opinion, that the Gentiles were admitted by God to a parity of religious situation with themselves, and that without their being bound by the law of Moses. The Gentile converts would probably accede to this opinion very readily. In this epistle, therefore, though directed to the Roman church in general, it is in truth a Jew writing to Jews. Accordingly you will take notice, that as often as his argument leads him to say any thing derogatory from the Jewish institution, he constantly follows it by a softening clause. Having (ii. 28, 29,) pronounced, not much perhaps to the satisfaction of the native Jews, "that he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither that circumcision which is outward in the flesh:" he adds immediately, "What advantage then hath the Jew, or what profit is there in circumcision? *Much every way.*" Having, in the third chapter, ver. 28, brought his argument to this formal conclusion, "that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," he presently subjoins, ver. 31, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! *Yea, we establish the law.*" In the seventh chapter, when in the sixth verse he had advanced the bold assertion, "that now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held;" in the very next verse he comes in with this healing question, "What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? God forbid! Nay, I had not known sin but by the law. Having in the following words insinuated, or rather more than insinuated, the inefficacy of the Jewish law, viii. 3, "for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:" after a digression indeed, but that sort of a digression which he could never resist, a rapturous contemplation of his Christian hope, and which occupies the latter part of this chapter; we find him in the

next, as if sensible that he had said something which would give offence, returning to his Jewish brethren in terms of the warmest affection and respect: "I say the truth in Christ Jesus; I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, *for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.*" When, in the thirty-first and thirty-second verses of this ninth chapter, he represented to the Jews the error of even the best of their nation, by telling them that "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, had not attained to the law of righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, for they stumbled at that stumbling stone," he takes care to annex to this declaration these conciliating expressions: "Brethren, *my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel* is, that they might be saved; for I bear them record that they *have a zeal of God*, but not according to knowledge." Lastly, having ch. x. 20, 21, by the application of a passage in Isaiah, insinuated the most ungrateful of all propositions to a Jewish ear, the rejection of the Jewish nation, as God's peculiar people; he hastens, as it were, to qualify the intelligence of their fall by this interesting expostulation: "I say, then, hath God cast away his people, (*i. e.* wholly and entirely?") *God forbid!* for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. *God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew;*" and follows this thought, throughout the whole of the eleventh chapter, in a series of reflections calculated to soothe the Jewish converts, as well as to procure from their Gentile brethren respect to the Jewish institution. Now all this is perfectly natural. In a real St. Paul, writing to real converts, it is what anxiety to bring them over to his persuasion would naturally produce; but there is an earnestness and a personality, if I may so call it, in the manner, which a cold forgery, I apprehend, would neither have conceived nor supported.

CHAPTER III.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians.

No. I.

Before we proceed to compare this epistle with the history, or with any other epistle, we will employ one number in stating certain remarks applicable to our argument, which arise from a perusal of the epistle itself.

By an expression in the first verse of the seventh chapter, "now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me," it appears, that this letter to the Corinthians was written by St. Paul in answer to one which he had received from them; and that the seventh, and some of the following chapters, are taken up in resolving certain doubts, and regulating certain points of order, concerning which the Corinthians had in their letter consulted him. This alone is a circumstance considerably in favour of the authenticity of the epistle; for it must have been a far-fetched contrivance in a forgery, first to have feigned the receipt of a letter from the Church of Corinth, which letter does not appear; and then to have drawn up a fictitious answer to it, relative to a great variety of doubts and inquiries, purely economical and domestic; and which, though likely enough to have occurred to an infant society, in a situation and under an institution so novel as that of a Christian Church then was, it must have very much exercised the author's invention, and could have answered no imaginable purpose of forgery, to introduce the mention of at all. Particulars of the kind we refer to, are such as the following: the rule of duty and prudence relative to entering into marriage, as applicable to virgins, to widows; the case of husbands married to unconverted wives; of wives having unconverted husbands; that case where the unconverted party chooses to separate, where he chooses to continue the union; the effect which their conversion produced upon their prior state, of circumcision, of slavery; the eating of things offered to idols, as it was in itself, as others were affected by it; the joining in idolatrous sacrifices; the decorum to be observed in their religious assemblies, the order of speaking, the silence of women, the covering or uncovering of the head, as it became men, as it became women. These subjects, with their several subdivisions, are so particular, minute, and numerous, that though they be exactly agreeable to the circumstances of the persons to whom the letter was written, nothing, I believe, but the existence and reality of those circumstances could have suggested to the writer's thoughts.

But this is not the only nor the principal observation upon the correspondence between the church of Corinth and their apostle, which I wish to point out. It appears, I think, in this correspondence, that although the Corinthians had written to St. Paul, requesting his answer and his directions in the several points above enumerated, yet that they had not said one syllable about the enormities and disorders which had crept in amongst them, and in the blame of which they all shared; but that St. Paul's information concerning the irregularities then prevailing at Corinth had come round to him from other quarters. The quarrels and disputes excited by their contentious adherence to their different teachers, and by their placing of them in competition with one another, were not mentioned in their *letter*, but communicated to St. Paul by more private intelligence: "It hath been declared unto me, my brethren, *by them which are of the house of Chloe*, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." (i. 11, 12.) The incestuous marriage "of a man with his father's wife," which St. Paul reprehends with so much severity in the fifth chapter of our epistle, and which was not the crime of an individual only, but a crime in which the whole church, by tolerating and conniving at it, had rendered themselves partakers, did not come to St. Paul's knowledge by the *letter*, but by a rumour which had reached his ears: "*It is reported commonly* that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife; and ye are puffed up, and have not

rather mourned that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you." (v. 1, 2.) Their going to law before the judicature of the country, rather than arbitrate and adjust their disputes among themselves, which St. Paul animadverts upon with his usual plainness, was not intimated to him in the *letter*, because he tells them his opinion of this conduct before he comes to the contents of the letter. Their litigiousness is censured by St. Paul in the sixth chapter of his epistle, and it is only at the beginning of the seventh chapter that he proceeds upon the articles which he found in their letter; and he proceeds upon them with this preface: "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me," (vii. 1,) which introduction he would not have used if he had been already discussing any of the subjects concerning which they had written. Their irregularities in celebrating the Lord's supper, and the utter perversion of the institution which ensued, were not in the letter, as is evident from the terms in which St. Paul mentions the notice he had received of it: "Now in this that I declare unto you, I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse; for first of all, when ye come together in the church, *I hear* that there be divisions among you, and *I partly believe it.*" Now that the Corinthians should, in their own letter, exhibit the fair side of their conduct to the apostle, and conceal from him the faults of their behaviour, was extremely natural, and extremely probable: but it was a distinction which would not, I think, have easily occurred to the author of a forgery; and much less likely is it, that it should have entered into his thoughts to make the distinction *appear* in the way in which it does appear, viz: not by the original letter, not by any express observation upon it in the answer, but distantly by marks perceivable in the manner, or in the order, in which St. Paul takes notice of their faults.

No. II.

Our epistle purports to have been written after St. Paul had already been at Corinth: "I, brethren, *when I came unto you*, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," (ii. 1,) and in many other places to the same effect. It purports also to have been written upon the eve of another visit to that church: "I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will," (iv. 19;) and again, "I will come to you when I shall pass through Macedonia," (xvi. 5.) Now the history relates that St. Paul did in fact visit Corinth *twice:* once as recorded at length in the eighteenth, and a second time as mentioned briefly in the twentieth chapter of the Acts. The same history also informs us, (Acts xx. 1,) that it was from Ephesus St. Paul proceeded upon his second journey into Greece.—Therefore, as the epistle purports to have been written a short time preceding that journey; and as St. Paul, the history tells us, had resided more than two years at Ephesus, before he set out upon it, it follows that it must have been from Ephesus, to be consistent with the history, that the epistle was written; and every note of *place* in the epistle agrees with this supposition. "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at *Ephesus*, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" (xv. 32.) I allow that the apostle might say this, wherever he was; but it was more natural and more to the purpose to say it, if he was at Ephesus at the time, and in the midst of those conflicts to which the expression relates. "The churches of Asia salute you," (xvi. 19.) Asia, throughout the Acts of the Apostles and the epistles of St. Paul, does not mean the whole of Asia Minor or Anatolia, nor even the whole of the proconsular Asia, but a district in the anterior part of that country, called Lydian Asia, divided from the rest, much as Portugal is from Spain, and of which district *Ephesus* was the capital. "Aquila and Priscilla salute you," (xvi. 19.) Aquila and Priscilla were at *Ephesus* during the period within which this epistle was written, Acts (xviii. 18. 26.) "I will tarry at *Ephesus* until Pentecost," (xvi. 8.) This, I apprehend, is in terms almost asserting that he was at Ephesus at the time of writing the epistle. —"A great and effectual door is opened unto me," (xvi. 9.) How well this declaration corresponded with the state of things at Ephesus, and the progress of the Gospel in these parts, we learn from the reflection with which the historian concludes the account of certain transactions which passed there: "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed," (Acts xix. 20;) as well as from the complaint of Demetrius, "that not only at Ephesus, but also throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded, and turned away much people," (xix. 26.) "And there are many adversaries," says the epistle, (xvi. 9.) Look into the history of this period: "When divers were hardened and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples." The conformity, therefore, upon this head of comparison, is circumstantial and perfect. If any one think that this is a conformity so obvious, that any forger of tolerable caution and sagacity would have taken care to preserve it, I must desire such a one to read the epistle for himself; and, when he has done so, to declare whether he has discovered one mark of art or design; whether the notes of *time* and *place* appear to him to be inserted with any reference to each other, with any view of their being compared with each other, or for the purpose of establishing a visible agreement with the history, in respect of them.

No. III.

Chap. iv. 17—19. "For this cause I have sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church. Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come unto you; but I will come unto you shortly, if the Lord will."

With this I compare Acts xix. 21, 22: "After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and *Achaia*, to go to Jerusalem; saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome; *so* he sent unto Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, *Timotheus* and Erastus."

Though it be not said, it appears, I think, with sufficient certainty, I mean from the history, independently of the epistle, that Timothy was sent upon this occasion into *Achaia*, of which Corinth was the capital city, as well as into Macedonia: for the sending of Timothy and Erastus is, in the passage where it is mentioned, plainly connected with St. Paul's own journey: *he sent them before*

him. As he therefore purposed to go into *Achaia* himself, it is highly probable that they were to go thither also. Nevertheless, they are said only to have been sent into Macedonia, because Macedonia was in truth the country to which they went immediately from Ephesus; being directed, as we suppose, to proceed afterwards from thence into Achaia. If this be so, the narrative agrees with the epistle; and the agreement is attended with very little appearance of design. One thing at least concerning it is certain: that if this passage of St. Paul's history had been taken from his letter, it would have sent Timothy to Corinth by name, or expressly however into Achaia.

But there is another circumstance in these two passages much less obvious, in which an agreement holds without any room for suspicion that it was produced by design. We have observed that the sending of Timothy into the peninsula of Greece was connected in the narrative with St. Paul's own journey thither; it is stated as the effect of the same resolution. Paul purposed to go into Macedonia; "*so* he sent two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus." Now in the epistle also you remark, that, when the apostle mentions his having sent Timothy unto them, in the very next sentence he speaks of his own visit; "for this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus who is my beloved son, &c. Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you; but I will come to you shortly, if God will." Timothy's journey, we see, is mentioned in the history and in the epistle, in close connexion with St. Paul's own. Here is the same order of thought and intention; yet conveyed under such diversity of circumstance and expression, and the mention of them in the epistle so allied to the occasion which introduces it, *viz.* the insinuation of his adversaries that he would come to Corinth no more, that I am persuaded no attentive reader will believe, that these passages were written in concert with one another, or will doubt but that the agreement is unsought and uncontrived.

But, in the Acts, Erastus accompanied Timothy in this journey, of whom no mention is made in the epistle. From what has been said in our observations upon the Epistle to the Romans, it appears probable that Erastus was a Corinthian. If so, though he accompanied Timothy to Corinth, he was only returning home, and Timothy was the messenger charged with St. Paul's orders.—At any rate this discrepancy shows that the passages were not taken from one another.

No. IV.

Chap. xvi. 10, 11. "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear; for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do: let no man therefore despise him, but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me, for I look for him with the brethren.

From the passage considered in the preceding number, it appears that Timothy was sent to Corinth either with the epistle, or before it: "for this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus." From the passage now quoted, we infer that Timothy was not sent *with* the epistle; for had he been the bearer of the letter, or accompanied it, would St. Paul in that letter have said, "*If* Timothy come?" Nor is the sequel consistent with the supposition of his carrying the letter; for if Timothy was with the apostle when he wrote the letter, could he say, as he does, "I look for him with the brethren?" I conclude, therefore, that Timothy had left St. Paul to proceed upon his journey before the letter was written. Farther, the passage before us seems to imply, that Timothy was not expected by St. Paul to arrive at Corinth, till after they had received the letter. He gives them directions in the letter how to treat him when he should arrive: "If he come," act towards him so and so. Lastly, the whole form of expression is most naturally applicable to the supposition of Timothy's coming to Corinth, not directly from St. Paul, but from some other quarter; and that his instructions had been, when he should reach Corinth, to return. Now, how stands this matter in the history? Turn to the nineteenth chapter and twenty-first verse of the Acts, and you will find that Timothy did not, when sent from Ephesus, where he left St. Paul, and where the present epistle was written, proceed by a straight course to Corinth, but that he went round through Macedonia. This clears up every thing; for, although Timothy was sent forth upon his journey before the letter was written, yet he might not reach Corinth till after the letter arrived there; and he would come to Corinth, when he did come, not directly from St. Paul at Ephesus, but from some part of Macedonia. Here, therefore, is a circumstantial and critical agreement, and unquestionably without design; for neither of the two passages in the epistle mentions Timothy's journey into Macedonia at all, though nothing but a circuit of that kind can explain and reconcile the expressions which the writer uses.

No. V.

Chap. i. 12. "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ."

Also, iii. 6. "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

This expression, "I have planted, Apollos watered," imports two things; first, that Paul had been at Corinth before Apollos; secondly, that Apollos had been at Corinth after Paul, but before the writing of this epistle. This implied account of the several events, and of the order in which they took place, corresponds exactly with the history. St. Paul, after his first visit into Greece, returned from Corinth into Syria by the way of Ephesus; and, dropping his companions Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, he proceeded forwards to Jerusalem; from Jerusalem he descended to Antioch; and from thence made a progress through some of the upper or northern provinces of the Lesser Asia, Acts xviii. 19. 23: during which progress, and consequently in the interval between St. Paul's first and second visit to Corinth, and consequently also before the writing of this epistle, which was at Ephesus two years at least after the apostle's return from his progress, we hear of Apollos, and we hear of him at Corinth. Whilst St. Paul was engaged, as hath been said, in Phrygia and Galatia, Apollos came down to Ephesus; and being, in St. Paul's absence, instructed by Aquila and Priscilla, and having obtained letters of recommendation from the church at Ephesus, he passed over to Achaia; and when he was there, we read that he "helped them much which had believed through grace, for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly."—Acts

xviii. 27, 28. To have brought Apollos into Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital city, as well as the principal Christian church; and to have shown that he preached the Gospel in that country, would have been sufficient for our purpose. But the history happens also to mention Corinth by name, as the place in which Apollos, after his arrival at Achaia, fixed his residence: for, proceeding with the account of St. Paul's travels, it tells us, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came down to Ephesus, xix. 1. What is said therefore of Apollos in the epistle, coincides exactly, and especially in the point of chronology, with what is delivered concerning him in the history. The only question now is, whether the allusions were made with a regard to this coincidence. Now, the occasions and purposes for which the name of Apollos is introduced in the Acts and in the Epistles, are so independent and so remote, that it is impossible to discover the smallest reference from one to the other. Apollos is mentioned in the Acts, in immediate connexion with the history of Aquila and Priscilla, and for the very singular circumstance of his "knowing only the baptism of John."

In the epistle, where none of these circumstances are taken notice of, his name first occurs, for the purpose of reproving the contentious spirit of the Corinthians; and it occurs only in conjunction with that of some others: "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." The second passage in which Apollos appears, "I have planted, Apollos watered," fixes, as we have observed, the order of time amongst three distinct events: but it fixes this, I will venture to pronounce, without the writer perceiving that he was doing any such thing. The sentence fixes this order in exact conformity with the history; but it is itself introduced solely for the sake of the reflection which follows: "Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

No. VI.

Chap. iv. 11, 12. "Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands."

We are expressly told in the history, that at Corinth St. Paul laboured with his own hands: "He found Aquila and Priscilla; and, because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought; for by their occupation they were tent-makers." But, in the text before us, he is made to say, that "he laboured *even unto the present hour*," that is, to the time of writing the epistle at Ephesus. Now, in the narration of St. Paul's transactions at Ephesus, delivered in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, nothing is said of his working with his own hands; but in the twentieth chapter we read, that upon his return from Greece, he sent for the elders of the Church of Ephesus, to meet him at Miletus; and in the discourse which he there addressed to them, amidst some other reflections which he calls to their remembrance, we find the following: "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; yea, yourselves also know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." The reader will not forget to remark, that though St. Paul be now at Miletus, it is to the elders of the church of Ephesus he is speaking, when he says, "Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my necessities;" and that the whole discourse relates to his conduct during his last preceding residence at Ephesus. That manual labour, therefore, which he had exercised at Corinth, he continued at Ephesus, and not only so, but continued it during that particular residence at Ephesus, near the conclusion of which this epistle was written; so that he might with the strictest truth say at the time of writing the epistle, "Even *unto this present hour* we labour, working with our own hands." The correspondency is sufficient, then, as to the undesignedness of it. It is manifest to my judgment, that if the history, in this article, had been taken from the epistle, this circumstance, if it appeared at all, would have appeared in its *place*, that is, in the direct account of St. Paul's transactions at Ephesus.—The correspondency would not have been effected, as it is, by a kind of reflected stroke, that is, by a reference in a subsequent speech, to what in the narrative was omitted. Nor is it likely, on the other hand, that a circumstance which is not extant in the history of St. Paul at Ephesus, should have been made the subject of a factitious allusion, in an epistle purporting to be written by him from that place; not to mention that the allusion itself, especially as to time, is too oblique and general to answer any purpose of forgery whatever.

No. VII.

Chap. ix. 20. "And unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law."

We have the disposition here described, exemplified in two instances which the history records; one, Acts xvi. 3, "Him (Timothy) would Paul have to go forth with him, and took and circumcised him, *because of the Jews in those quarters*; for they knew all that his father was a Greek." This was before the writing of the epistle. The other, Acts xxi. 23, 26, and after the writing of the epistle: "Do this that we say to thee: we have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, that they may shave their heads; and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.—Then Paul took the men, and the next day, *purifying himself with them, entered into the temple*." Nor does this concurrence between the character and the instances look like the result of contrivance. St. Paul, in the epistle, describes, or is made to describe, his own accommodating conduct towards Jews and towards Gentiles, towards the weak and over-scrupulous, towards men indeed of every variety of character; "to them that are without law as without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law; to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might gain some." This is the sequel of the text which stands at the head of the present number. Taking therefore the whole passage together, the apostle's condescension to the Jews is mentioned only as a part of his general disposition towards all. It is not probable that this character

should have been made up from the instances in the Acts, which relate solely to his dealings with the Jews. It is not probable that a sophist should take his hint from those instances, and then extend it so much beyond them; and it is still more incredible that the two instances, in the Acts, circumstantially related and interwoven with the history, should have been fabricated in order to suit the character which St. Paul gives of himself in the epistle.

No. VIII.

Chap. i. 14—17. "I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I baptized in my own name; and I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other: for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel."

It may be expected, that those whom the apostle baptized with his own hands, were converts distinguished from the rest by some circumstance, either of eminence or of connexion with him. Accordingly, of the three names here mentioned, Crispus, we find, from Acts xviii. 8, was a "chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth, who believed in the Lord with all his house." Gaius, it appears from Romans xvi. 23, was St. Paul's host at Corinth, and the host, he tells us, "of the whole church." The household of Stephanas, we read in the sixteenth chapter of this epistle, "were the first fruits of Achaia." Here, therefore, is the propriety we expected: and it is a proof of reality not to be contemned; for their names appearing in the several places in which they occur, with a mark of distinction belonging to each, could hardly be the effect of chance, without any truth to direct it: and on the other hand, to suppose that they were picked out from these passages, and brought together in the text before us, in order to display a conformity of names, is both improbable in itself, and is rendered more so, by the purpose for which they are introduced. They come in to assist St. Paul's exculpation of himself, against the possible charge of having assumed the character of the founder of a separate religion, and with no other visible, or, as I think, imaginable design.*

No. IX.

Chap. xvii. 10, 11. "Now, if Timotheus come let no man despise him." Why *despise* him? This charge is not given concerning any other messenger whom St. Paul sent, and, in the different epistles, many such messengers are mentioned. Turn to 1 Tim. chap. iv. 12, and you will find that Timothy was a *young man*, younger probably than those who were usually employed in the Christian mission; and that St. Paul, apprehending lest he should, on that account, be exposed to contempt, urges upon him the caution which is there inserted —"Let no man despise thy youth."

No. X.

Chap. xvi. 1. "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye."

The churches of Galatia and Phrygia were the last churches which St. Paul had visited before the writing of this epistle. He was now at Ephesus, and he came thither immediately from visiting these churches: "He went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia, in order, strengthening all the disciples. And it came to pass that Paul having passed through the upper coasts, (viz. the above-named countries, called the upper coasts, as being the northern part of Asia Minor,) came to Ephesus," Acts xviii. 23; xix. 1. These therefore, probably, were the last churches at which he left directions for their public conduct during his absence. Although two years intervened between his journey to Ephesus and his writing this epistle, yet it does not appear that during that time he visited any other church. That he had not been silent when he was in Galatia, upon this subject of contribution for the poor, is farther made out from a hint which he lets fall in his epistle to that church: "Only they (viz. the other apostles,) would that we should remember the poor, the same also which I was forward to do."

No. XI.

Chap. iv. 18. "Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come unto you."

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* Chap. i. 1. "Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, unto the Church of God which is at Corinth." The only account we have of any person who bore the name of Sosthenes, is found in the eighteenth chapter of the Acts. When the Jews at Corinth had brought Paul before Gallio, and Gallio had dismissed their complaint as unworthy of his interference, and had driven them from the judgment-seat; "then all the Greeks," says the historian, "took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, "and beat him before the judgment-seat." The Sosthenes here spoken of, was a Corinthian; and, if he was a Christian, and with St. Paul when he wrote this epistle, was likely enough to be joined with him in the salutation of the Corinthian church. But here occurs a difficulty. If Sosthenes was a Christian at the time of this uproar, why should the *Greeks* beat him? The assault upon the Christians was made by the *Jews*. It was the *Jews* who had brought Paul before the magistrate. If it had been the Jews also who had beaten Sosthenes, I should not have doubted but that he had been a favourer of St. Paul, and the same person who is joined with him in the epistle. Let us see therefore whether there be not some error in our present text. The Alexandrian manuscript gives παντες alone, without οι Ελληνες, and is followed in this reading by the Coptic version, by the Arabian version, published by Arpenius, by the Vulgate, and by Bede's Latin version. The Greek manuscripts again, as well as Chrysostom, give οι Ιουδαιοι, in the place of οι Ελληνες. A great plurality of manuscripts authorize the reading which is retained in our copies. In this variety it appears to me extremely probable that the historian originally wrote παντες alone, and that οι Ελληνες, and οι Ιουδαιοι have been respectively added as explanatory of what the word παντες was supposed to mean. The sentence, without the addition of either name, would run very perspicuously, thus, "και απηλασεν αυτους απο του βηματος. επιλαβομενοι δε παντες Σωσθενην τον αρχισυναγωγον, ετυπτον εμπροσθεν του βηματος. and he drove them away from the judgment-seat; and they all," viz. the crowds of Jews whom the judge had bid begone, "took Sosthenes and beat him before the judgment-seat." It is certain that, as the whole body of the people were Greeks, the application of *all* to them was unusual and hard. If I was describing an insurrection at Paris, I might say *all* the Jews, *all* the Protestants, or *all* the English acted so and so; but I should scarcely say *all* the French, when the whole mass of the community were of that description. As what is here offered is founded upon a various reading, and that in opposition to the greater part of the manuscripts that are extant I have not given it a place in the text.

Why should they suppose that he would not come? Turn to the first chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and you will find that he had already *disappointed* them: "I was minded to come unto you before, that you might have a second benefit; and to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judea. When I, therefore, was thus minded did I use lightness? Or the things that I purpose do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay? But, as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay." It appears from this quotation, that he had not only intended, but that he had promised them a visit before; for, otherwise, why should he apologize for the change of his purpose, or express so much anxiety lest this change should be imputed to any culpable fickleness in his temper; and lest he should thereby seem to them, as one whose word was not, in any sort, to be depended upon? Besides which, the terms made use of, plainly refer to a promise, "Our *word toward you* was not yea and nay." St. Paul, therefore, had signified an intention which he had not been able to execute; and this seeming breach of his word, and the delay of his visit, had, with some who were evil affected towards him, given birth to a suggestion that he would come no more to Corinth.

No. XII.

Chap. v. 7, 8. "For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Dr. Benson tells us, that from this passage, compared with chapter xvi. 8, it has been conjectured that this epistle was written about the time of the Jewish passover; and to me the conjecture appears to be very well founded. The passage to which Dr. Benson refers us is this: "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost." With this passage he ought to have joined another in the same context: "And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you;" for from the two passages laid together, it follows that the epistle was written before Pentecost, yet after winter; which necessarily determines the date to the part of the year within which the passover falls. It was written before Pentecost, because he says, "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost." It was written after winter, because he tells them, "It may be that I may abide, yea, and winter with you." The winter which the apostle purposed to pass at Corinth was undoubtedly the winter next ensuing to the date of the epistle: yet it was a winter subsequent to the ensuing Pentecost, because he did not intend to set forwards upon his journey till after that feast. The words, "let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," look very like words suggested by the season; at least they have, upon that supposition, a force and significancy which do not belong to them upon any other; and it is not a little remarkable, that the hints casually dropped in the epistle concerning particular parts of the year, should coincide with this supposition.

CHAPTER IV.

Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

No. I.

I WILL not say that it is impossible, having seen the First Epistle to the Corinthians, to construct a second with ostensible allusions to the first; or that it is impossible that both should be fabricated, so as to carry on an order and continuation of story, by successive references to the same events. But I say that this, in either case, must be the effect of craft and design. Whereas, whoever examines the allusions to the former epistle which he finds in this, whilst he will acknowledge them to be such as would rise spontaneously to the hand of the writer, from the very subject of the correspondence, and the situation of the corresponding parties, supposing these to be real, will see no particle of reason to suspect, either that the clauses containing these allusions were *insertions* for the purpose, or that the several transactions of the Corinthian church were feigned, in order to form a train of narrative, or to support the appearance of connexion between the two epistles.

1. In the First Epistle, St. Paul announces his intention of passing through Macedonia, in his way to Corinth: "I will come to you when I shall pass through Macedonia." In the Second Epistle, we find him arrived in Macedonia, and about to pursue his journey to Corinth. But observe the manner in which this is made to appear: "I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago, and your zeal hath provoked very many: yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready; lest, haply, if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not you) be ashamed in this same confident boasting," chap. ix. 2, 3, 4. St. Paul's being in Macedonia at the time of writing the epistle, is, in this passage, inferred only from his saying that he had boasted to the Macedonians of the alacrity of his Achaian converts; and the fear which he expresses, lest, if any of the Macedonian Christians should come with him unto Achaia, they should find his boasting unwarranted by the event. The business of the contribution is the sole cause of mentioning Macedonia at all. Will it be insinuated that this passage was framed merely to state that St. Paul was now in Macedonia; and, by that statement, to produce an apparent agreement with the purpose of visiting Macedonia, notified in the First Epistle? Or will it be thought probable, that, if a sophist had meant to place St. Paul in Macedonia, for the sake of giving countenance to his forgery, he would have done it in so oblique a manner as through the medium of a contribution? The same thing may be observed of another text in the epistle, in which the name of Macedonia occurs: "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach the Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus, my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia." I mean, that it may be observed of this passage also, that there is a reason for mentioning Macedonia,

entirely distinct from the purpose of showing St. Paul to be *there*. Indeed, if the passage before us show that point at all, it shows it so obscurely, that Grotius, though he did not doubt that Paul was now in Macedonia, refers this text to a different journey. Is this the hand of a forger, meditating to establish a false conformity? The text, however, in which it is most strongly implied that St. Paul wrote the present epistle from Macedonia, is found in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses of the seventh chapter: "I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation; for, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest; without were fightings, within were fears: nevertheless, God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus." Yet even here, I think, no one will contend, that St. Paul's coming to Macedonia, or being in Macedonia, was the principal thing intended to be told; or that the telling of it, indeed, was any part of the intention with which the text was written; or that the mention even of the name of Macedonia was not purely incidental, in the description of those tumultuous sorrows with which the writer's mind hath been lately agitated, and from which he was relieved by the coming of Titus. The first five verses of the eighth chapter, which commend the liberality of the Macedonian churches, do not, in my opinion, by themselves, prove St. Paul to have been at Macedonia at the time of writing the epistle.

2. In the First Epistle, St. Paul denounces a severe censure against an incestuous marriage, which had taken place amongst the Corinthian converts, with the connivance, not to say with the approbation, of the church; and enjoins the church to purge itself of this scandal, by expelling the offender from its society: "It is reported commonly, that there is fornication among you, and such fornication, as is not so much as named amongst the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife; and ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you; for I, verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord," chap. v. 1—5. In the Second Epistle, we find this sentence executed, and the offender to be so affected with the punishment, that St. Paul now intercedes for his restoration; "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many; so that, contrariwise, ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow; wherefore, I beseech you that ye would confirm your love towards him," 2 Cor. chap. ii. 7, 8. Is this whole business feigned for the sake of carrying on a continuation of story through the two epistles? The church also, no less than the offender, was brought by St. Paul's reproof to a deep sense of the impropriety of their conduct. Their penitence, and their respect to his authority, were, as might be expected, exceeding grateful to St. Paul: "We were comforted not by Titus' coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind towards me, so that I rejoiced the more; for, though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent; for I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry, after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing," chap. vii. 7—9. That this passage is to be referred to the incestuous marriage, is proved by the twelfth verse of the same chapter: "Though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong; but that our care for you, in the sight of God, might appear unto you." There were, it is true, various topics of blame noticed in the First Epistle; but there was none, except this of the incestuous marriage, which could be called a transaction between private parties, or of which it could be said that one particular person had done the "wrong," and another particular person had "suffered it." Could all this be without foundation? or could it be put into the Second Epistle, merely to furnish an obscure sequel to what had been said about an incestuous marriage in the first?

3. In the sixteenth chapter of the First Epistle, a collection for the saints is recommended to be set forwards at Corinth: "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye," chap. xvi. 1. In the ninth chapter of the Second Epistle, such a collection is spoken of, as in readiness to be received: "As touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you, for I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago, and your zeal hath provoked very many," chap. ix. 1, 2. This is such a continuation of the transaction as might be expected; or, possibly it will be said, as might easily be counterfeited; but there is a circumstance of nicety in the agreement between the two epistles, which, I am convinced, the author of a forgery would not have hit upon, or which, if he had hit upon it, he would have set forth with more clearness. The Second Epistle speaks of the Corinthians as having begun this eleemosynary business a year before: "This is expedient for you who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago," chap. viii. x. "I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago," chap. ix. 2. From these texts it is evident, that something had been done in the business a year before. It appears, however, from other texts in the epistle, that the contribution was not yet collected or paid; for brethren were sent from St. Paul to Corinth, "to make up their bounty," chap. ix. 5. They are urged to "perform the doing of it," chap. viii. 11. "And every man was exhorted to give as he purposed in his heart," chap. ix. 7. The contribution, therefore, as represented in our present epistle, was in readiness, yet not received from the contributors; was begun, was forward long before, yet not hitherto collected. Now this representation agrees with one, and only with one, supposition, namely, that every man had laid by in store, had already provided the fund, from which he was afterwards to contribute—the very case which the First Epistle authorises us to suppose to have existed; for in that epistle St. Paul had charged the Corinthians,

" upon the first day of the week, every one of them, to lay by in store as God had prospered him,"* 1 Cor. chap. xvi. 2.

No. II.

In comparing the Second Epistle to the Corinthians with the Acts of the Apostles, we are soon brought to observe, not only that there exists no vestige either of the epistle having been taken from the history, or the history from the epistle; but also that there appears in the contents of the epistle positive evidence, that neither was borrowed from the other. Titus, who bears a conspicuous part in the epistle, is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles at all. St. Paul's sufferings enumerated, chap. xi. 24. "of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep," cannot be made out from his history as delivered in the Acts; nor would this account have been given by a writer, who either drew his knowledge of St. Paul from that history, or who was careful to preserve a conformity with it. The account in the epistle of St. Paul's escape from Damascus, though agreeing in the main fact with the account of the same transaction in the Acts, is related with such difference of circumstance, as renders it utterly improbable that one should be derived from the other. The two accounts, placed by the side of each other, stand as follows:

2 Cor. chap. xi. 32, 33.	Acts, chap. ix. 23—25.
In Damascus, the governor under Aretas the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend *me*; and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.	And after many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him; but their laying in wait was known of Saul, and they watched the gates day and night to kill him: then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

Now if we be satisfied in general concerning these two ancient writings, that the one was not known to the writer of the other, or not consulted by him; then the accordances which may be pointed out between them, will admit of no solution so probable, as the attributing of them to truth and reality, as their common foundation.

No. III.

The opening of this epistle exhibits a connexion with the history, which alone would satisfy my mind that the epistle was written by St. Paul, and by St. Paul in the situation in which the history places him. Let it be remembered, that in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, St. Paul is represented as driven away from Ephesus, or as leaving however Ephesus, in consequence of an uproar in that city, excited by some interested adversaries of the new religion. The account of the tumult is as follows: "When they heard these sayings," viz. Demetrius's complaint of the danger to be apprehended from St. Paul's ministry to the established worship of the Ephesian goddess, "they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion; and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre; and when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not; and certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring that he would not adventure himself into the theatre. Some, therefore, cried one thing, and some another; for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward; and Alexander beckoned with his hand, and would have made his defence unto the people; but, when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.—And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia." When he was arrived in Macedonia, he wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians which is now before us; and he begins his epistle in this wise: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For, as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ; and whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation: and our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that, as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation. For

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* The following observations will satisfy us concerning the purity of our apostle's conduct in the suspicious business of a pecuniary contribution.

1. He disclaims the having received any inspired authority for the directions which he is giving; "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love," 2 Cor. chap. viii. 8. Who, that had a sinister purpose to answer by the recommending of subscriptions, would thus distinguish, and thus lower the credit of his own recommendation?

2. Although he asserts the general right of Christian ministers to a maintenance from their ministry, yet he protests against the making use of this right in his own person: "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel; but I have used none of these things, neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me; for it were better for me to die than that any man should make my glorying, *i. e.* my professions of disinterestedness, void," 1 Cor. chap. ix. 14, 15.

3. He repeatedly proposes that there should be associates with himself in the management of the public bounty; not colleagues of his own appointment, but persons elected for that purpose by the contributors themselves. "And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem; and if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me," 1 Cor. chap. xvi. 3, 4. And in the Second Epistle, what is here proposed, we find actually done, and done for the very purpose of guarding his character against any imputation that might be brought upon it, in the discharge of a pecuniary trust: "And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches; and not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace (gift) which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and the declaration of your ready mind: avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us; providing for things honest, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men;" *i. e.* not resting in the consciousness of our own integrity, but, in such a subject, careful also to approve our integrity to the public judgment. 2 Cor. chap. viii. 18—21.

we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble *which came to us in Asia*, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." Nothing could be more expressive of the circumstances in which the history describes St. Paul to have been at the time when the epistle purports to be written; or rather, nothing could be more expressive of the sensations arising from these circumstances, than this passage. It is the calm recollection of a mind emerged from the confusion of instant danger. It is that devotion and solemnity of thought, which follows a recent deliverance. There is just enough of particularity in the passage to show that it is to be referred to the tumult at Ephesus: "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia." And there is nothing more; no mention of Demetrius, of the seizure of St. Paul's friends, of the interference of the town-clerk, of the occasion or nature of the danger which St. Paul had escaped, or even of the city where it happened; in a word, no recital from which a suspicion could be conceived, either that the author of the epistle had made use of the narrative in the Acts; or, on the other hand, that he had sketched the outline, which the narrative in the Acts only filled up. That the forger of an epistle, under the name of St. Paul, should borrow circumstances from a history of St. Paul then extant; or, that the author of a history of St. Paul should gather materials from letters bearing St. Paul's name, may be credited; but I cannot believe that any forger whatever, should fall upon an expedient so refined, as to exhibit sentiments adapted to a situation, and to leave his readers to seek out that situation from the history; still less that the author of a history should go about to frame facts and circumstances, fitted to supply the sentiments which he found in the letter. It may be said, perhaps, that it does not appear from the history, that any danger threatened St. Paul's life in the uproar at Ephesus, so imminent as that from which in the epistle he represents himself to have been delivered. This matter, it is true, is not stated by the historian in form; but the personal danger of the apostle, we cannot doubt, must have been extreme, when the "whole city was filled with confusion;" when the populace had "seized his companions;" when, in the distraction of his mind, he insisted upon "coming forth amongst them;" when the Christians who were about him "would not suffer him;" when "his friends, certain of the chief of Asia, sent to him, desiring that he would not adventure himself in the tumult;" when, lastly, he was obliged to quit immediately the place and the country, "and when the tumult was ceased, to depart into Macedonia." All which particulars are found in the narration, and justify St. Paul's own account, "that he was pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despaired even of life; that he had the sentence of death in himself;" *i. e.* that he looked upon himself as a man condemned to die.

No. IV.

It has already been remarked, that St. Paul's original intention was to have visited Corinth in his way to Macedonia: "I was minded to come unto you before, and to pass by you into Macedonia," 2 Cor. chap. i. 15, 16. It has also been remarked that he changed his intention, and ultimately resolved upon going through Macedonia *first*. Now upon this head there exists a circumstance of correspondency between our epistle and the history, which is not very obvious to the reader's observation; but which, when observed, will be found, I think, close and exact. Which circumstance is this: that though the change of St. Paul's intention be expressly mentioned only in the second epistle, yet it appears, both from the history and from this second epistle, that the change had taken place before the writing of the first epistle; that it appears however from neither, otherwise than by an inference, unnoticed perhaps by almost every one who does not sit down professedly to the examination.

First, then, how does this point appear from the history? In the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, and the twenty-first verse, we are told, that "Paul purposed in the spirit when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem. So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season." A short time after this, and evidently in pursuance of the same intention, we find (chap. xx. 1, 2.) that Paul departed from Ephesus for to go into Macedonia: and that when he had gone over those parts, he came into Greece." The resolution therefore of passing first through Macedonia, and from thence into Greece, was formed by St. Paul previously to the sending away of Timothy. The order in which the two countries are mentioned shows the direction of his intended route, "when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia." Timothy and Erastus, who were to precede him in his progress, were sent by him from Ephesus into Macedonia. He himself a short time afterwards, and, as hath been observed, evidently in continuation and pursuance of the same design, "departed for to go into Macedonia." If he had ever, therefore, entertained a different plan of his journey, which is not hinted in the history, he must have changed that plan before this time. But, from the 17th verse of the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, we discover, that Timothy had been sent away from Ephesus before that epistle was written: "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son." The change, therefore, of St. Paul's resolution, which was prior to the sending away of Timothy, was necessarily prior to the writing of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

Thus stands the order of dates, as collected from the history, compared with the First Epistle. Now let us inquire, secondly, how this matter is represented in the epistle before us. In the sixteenth verse of the first chapter of this epistle, St. Paul speaks of the intention which he had once entertained of visiting Achaia, in his way to Macedonia: "In this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit: and to pass by you into Macedonia." After protesting, in the seventeenth verse, against any evil construction that might be put upon his laying aside of this intention, in the twenty-third verse he discloses the cause of it: "Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that, to spare

you, I came not as yet unto Corinth." And then he proceeds as follows: "But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness: for, if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me? *And I wrote this same unto you*, lest when I came I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all; for, out of much affliction and anguish of heart, *I wrote unto you with many tears;* not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you: but if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me but in part, that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many." In this quotation, let the reader first direct his attention to the clause marked by Italics, "and I wrote this same unto you," and let him consider, whether from the context, and from the structure of the whole passage, it be not evident that this writing was after St. Paul had "determined with himself, that he would not come again to them in heaviness?" whether, indeed, it was not in consequence of this determination, or at least with this determination upon his mind? And, in the next place, let him consider whether the sentence, "I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness," do not plainly refer to that postponing of his visit, to which he had alluded in the verse but one before, when he said, "I call God for a record upon my soul, that, to spare you, I came not as yet unto Corinth:" and whether this be not the visit of which he speaks in the sixteenth verse, wherein he informs the Corinthians, "that he had been minded to pass by them into Macedonia;" but that, for reasons, which argued no levity or fickleness in his disposition, he had been compelled to change his purpose. If this be so, then it follows that the writing here mentioned was posterior to the change of his intention. The only question, therefore, that remains, will be, whether this writing relate to the letter which we now have under the title of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, or to some other letter not extant? And upon this question, I think Mr. Locke's observation decisive; namely, that the second clause marked in the quotation by Italics, "I wrote unto you with many tears," and the first clause so marked, "I wrote this same unto you," belong to one writing, whatever that was; and that the second clause goes on to advert to a circumstance which is found in our present First Epistle to the Corinthians; namely, the case and punishment of the incestuous person. Upon the whole, then, we see, that it is capable of being inferred from St. Paul's own words, in the long extract which we have quoted, that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written after St. Paul had determined to postpone his journey to Corinth; in other words, that the change of his purpose with respect to the course of his journey, though expressly mentioned only in the Second Epistle, had taken place before the writing of the First; the point which we made out to be implied in the history, by the order of the events there recorded, and the allusions to those events in the First Epistle. Now this is a species of congruity of all others the most to be relied upon. It is not an agreement between two accounts of the same transaction, or between different statements of the same fact, for the fact is not stated; nothing that can be called an account is given; but it is the junction of two conclusions, deduced from independent sources, and deducible only by investigation and comparison.

This point, viz. the change of the route, being prior to the writing of the First Epistle, also falls in with, and accounts for, the manner in which he speaks in that epistle of his journey. His first intention had been, as he here declares, to "pass by them into Macedonia:" that intention having been previously given up, he writes, in his First Epistle, "that he would not see them now by the way," *i. e.* as he must have done upon his first plan; "but that he trusted to tarry a while with them, and possibly to abide, yea and winter with them," I Corin. chap. xvi. 5, 6. It also accounts for a singularity in the text referred to, which must strike every reader: "I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia; for I do pass through Macedonia." The supplemental sentence, "for I do pass through Macedonia," imports that there had been some previous communication upon the subject of the journey; and also that there had been some vacillation and indecisiveness in the apostle's plan: both which we now perceive to have been the case. The sentence is as much as to say, "This is what I at last resolve upon." The expression, "ὅταν Μακεδονίαν διέλθω," is ambiguous; it may denote either "when I pass, or when I shall have passed, through Macedonia:" the considerations offered above fix it to the latter sense. Lastly, the point we have endeavoured to make out, confirms, or rather, indeed, is necessary to the support of a conjecture, which forms the subject of a number in our observations upon the First Epistle, that the insinuation of certain of the church of Corinth, that he would come no more amongst them, was founded on some previous disappointment of their expectations.

No. V.

But if St. Paul had changed his purpose before the writing of the First Epistle, why did he defer explaining himself to the Corinthians, concerning the reason of that change, until he wrote the Second? This is a very fair question; and we are able, I think, to return to it a satisfactory answer. The real cause, and the cause at length assigned by St. Paul for postponing his visit to Corinth, and not travelling by the route which he had at first designed, was the disorderly state of the Corinthian church at the time, and the painful severities which he should have found himself obliged to exercise, if he had come amongst them during the existence of these irregularities. He was willing therefore to try, before he came in person, what a letter of authoritative objurgation would do amongst them, and to leave time for the operation of the experiment. That was his scheme in writing the First Epistle. But it was not for him to acquaint them with the scheme. After the epistle had produced its effect (and to the utmost extent, as it should seem, of the apostle's hopes;) when he had wrought in them a deep sense of their fault, and an almost passionate solicitude to restore themselves to the approbation of their teacher; when Titus (chap. vii. 6, 7, 11.) had brought him intelligence "of their earnest desire, their mourning, their fervent mind towards him, of their sorrow and their penitence; what carefulness, what clearing of themselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what revenge,"

his letter, and the general concern occasioned by it, had excited amongst them; he then opens himself fully upon the subject. The affectionate mind of the apostle is touched by this return of zeal and duty. He tells them that he did not visit them at the time proposed, lest their meeting should have been attended with mutual grief; and with grief to him embittered by the reflection, that he was giving pain to those, from whom alone he could receive comfort: "I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness; for, if I make you sorry, who is he that maketh me glad but the same which is made sorry by me?" chap. ii. 1, 2: that he had written his former epistle to warn them beforehand of their fault, "lest when he came he should have sorrow of them of whom he ought to rejoice;" chap. ii. 3: that he had the farther view, though perhaps unperceived by them, of making an experiment of their fidelity, "to know the proof of them, whether they are obedient in all things," chap. ii. 9. This full discovery of his motive came very naturally from the apostle, after he had seen the success of his measures, but would not have been a seasonable communication before. The whole composes a train of sentiment and of conduct resulting from real situation, and from real circumstance, and as remote as possible from fiction or imposture.

No. VI.

Chap. xi. 9. "When I was present with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied." The principal fact set forth in this passage, the arrival at Corinth of brethren from Macedonia during St. Paul's first residence in that city, is explicitly recorded, Acts, chap. xviii. 1, 5. "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ."

No. VII.

The above quotation from the Acts proves that Silas and Timotheus were assisting to St. Paul in preaching the Gospel at Corinth. With which correspond the words of the epistle, (chap. i. 19,) "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea." I do admit that the correspondency, considered by itself, is too direct and obvious; and that an impostor with the history before him might, and probably would, produce agreements of the same kind. But let it be remembered, that this reference is found in a writing, which, from many discrepancies, and especially from those noted No. II., we may conclude, was not composed by any one who had consulted, and who pursued the history. Some observation also arises upon the variation of the name. We read Silas in the Acts, Silvanus in the epistle. The similitude of these two names, if they were the names of different persons, is greater than could easily have proceeded from accident; I mean that it is not probable, that two persons, placed in situations so much alike, should bear names so nearly resembling each other.* On the other hand, the difference of the name in the two passages negatives the supposition of the passages, or the account contained in them, being transcribed either from the other.

No. VIII.

Chap. ii. 12, 13. "When I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."

To establish a conformity between this passage and the history, nothing more is necessary to be presumed, than that St. Paul proceeded from Ephesus to Macedonia, upon the same course by which he came back from Macedonia to Ephesus, or rather to Miletus in the neighbourhood of Ephesus; in other words, that in his journey to the peninsula of Greece, he went and returned the same way. St. Paul is now in Macedonia, where he had lately arrived from Ephesus. Our quotation imports that in his journey he had stopped at Troas. Of this, the history says nothing, leaving us only the short account that "Paul departed from Ephesus, for to go into Macedonia." But the history says, that in his *return* from Macedonia to Ephesus, "Paul sailed from Philippi to *Troas;* and that, when the disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread, Paul preached unto them all night; that from Troas he went by land to Assos; from Assos, taking ship and coasting along the front of Asia Minor, he came by Mitylene to Miletus." Which account proves, first, that Troas lay in the way by which St. Paul passed between Ephesus and Macedonia; secondly, that he had disciples there. In one journey between these two places, the epistle, and in another journey between the same places, the history, makes him stop at this city. Of the first journey he is made to say, "that a door was in that city opened unto me of the Lord; in the second, we find disciples there collected around him, and the apostle exercising his ministry, with, what was even in him, more than ordinary zeal and labour. The epistle, therefore, is in this instance confirmed, if not by the terms, at least by the probability of the history; a species of confirmation by no means to be despised, because, as far as it reaches, it is evidently uncontrived.

Grotius, I know, refers the arrival at Troas, to which the epistle alludes, to a different period, but I think very improbably; for nothing appears to me more certain, than that the meeting with Titus, which St. Paul expected at Troas, was the same meeting which took place in Macedonia, viz. upon Titus's coming out of Greece. In the quotation before us, he tells the Corinthians, "When I came to Troas, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia." Then in the seventh chapter he writes, "When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears; nevertheless God, that comforteth them that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus." These two passages plainly relate to the same journey of Titus, in meeting with whom St. Paul had been disappointed at Troas, and rejoiced in Macedonia. And amongst other reasons which fix the former passage to the coming of Titus out

* That they were the same person is farther confirmed by 1 Thess. chap. i. 1. compared with Acts, chap. xvii. 10.

of Greece, is the consideration, that it was nothing to the Corinthians that St. Paul did not meet with Titus at Troas, were it not that he was to bring intelligence from Corinth. The mention of the disappointment in this place, upon any other supposition, is irrelative.

No. IX.

Chap. xi. 24, 25. "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep."

These particulars cannot be extracted out of the Acts of the Apostles; which proves, as hath been already observed, that the epistle was not framed from the history: yet they are consistent with it, which, considering how numerically circumstantial the account is, is more than could happen to arbitrary and independent fictions. When I say that these particulars are *consistent* with the history, I mean, first, that there is no article in the enumeration which is contradicted by the history; secondly, that the history, though silent with respect to many of the facts here enumerated, has left space for the existence of these facts, consistent with the fidelity of its own narration.

First, no contradiction is discoverable between the epistle and the history. When St. Paul says, *thrice* was I beaten with rods, although the history record only *one* beating with rods, viz. at Philippi, Acts xvi. 22, yet is there no contradiction. It is only the omission in one book of what is related in another. But had the history contained accounts of *four* beatings with rods, at the time of writing this epistle, in which St. Paul says that he had only suffered three, there would have been a contradiction properly so called. The same observation applies generally to the other parts of the enumeration, concerning which the history is silent: but there is one clause in the quotation particularly deserving of remark; because, when confronted with the history, it furnishes the nearest approach to a contradiction, without a contradiction being actually incurred, of any I remember to have met with. "Once," saith St. Paul, "was I stoned." Does the history relate that St. Paul, prior to the writing of this epistle, had been stoned more than once? The history mentions distinctly one occasion upon which St. Paul was stoned, viz. at Lystra in Lycaonia. "Then came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people; and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead," chap. xiv. 19. And it mentions also another occasion in which "an assault was made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews, with their rulers, to use them despitefully and to stone them; but they were aware of it," the history proceeds to tell us, "and fled into Lystra and Derbe." This happened at Iconium, prior to the date of the epistle. Now had the assault been completed; had the history related that a stone was thrown, as it relates that preparations were made both by Jews and Gentiles to stone Paul and his companions; or even had the account of this transaction stopped, without going on to inform us that Paul and his companions were "aware of their danger and fled," a contradiction between the history and the epistle would have ensued. Truth is necessarily consistent: but it is scarcely possible that independent accounts, not having truth to guide them, should thus advance to the very brink of contradiction without falling into it.

Secondly, I say, that if the Acts of the Apostles be silent concerning many of the instances enumerated in the epistle, this silence may be accounted for, from the plan and fabric of the history. The date of the epistle synchronizes with the beginning of the twentieth chapter of the Acts. The part, therefore, of the history, which precedes the twentieth chapter, is the only part in which can be found any notice of the persecutions, to which St. Paul refers. Now it does not appear that the author of the history was with St. Paul until his departure from Troas, on his way to Macedonia, as related, chap. xvi. 10; or rather, indeed, the contrary appears. It is in this point of the history that the language changes. In the seventh and eighth verses of this chapter the third person is used. "After *they* were come to Mysia, *they* essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not; and *they* passing by Mysia came to Troas;" and the third person is in like manner constantly used throughout the foregoing part of the history. In the tenth verse of this chapter, the first person comes in: "After Paul had seen the vision, immediately *we* endeavoured to go into Macedonia; assuredly gathering that the Lord had called *us* to preach the Gospel unto them." Now, from this time to the writing of the epistle, the history occupies four chapters; yet it is in these, if in any, that a regular or continued account of the apostle's life is to be expected; for how succinctly his history is delivered in the preceding part of the book, that is to say, from the time of his conversion to the time when the historian joined him at Troas, except the particulars of his conversion itself, which are related circumstantially, may be understood from the following observations:—

The history of a period of sixteen years is comprised in less than three chapters; and of these, a material part is taken up with discourses. After his conversion, he continued in the neighbourhood of Damascus, according to the history, for a certain considerable, though indefinite, length of time, according to his own words, (Gal. i. 18,) for three years; of which no other account is given than this short one, that "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God; that all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name, in Jerusalem? that he increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus; and that, after many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him." From Damascus he proceeded to Jerusalem: and of his residence there nothing more particular is recorded, than that "he was with the apostles, coming in and going out; that he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians, who went about to kill him." From Jerusalem, the history sends him to his native city of Tarsus.* It seems probable, from the order and disposition of the history, that St. Paul's stay at Tarsus was of some continuance; for we hear nothing of him, until, after a long apparent interval, and much interjacent narrative, Barnabas desirous of Paul's assistance upon the enlargement of the Christian

* Acts ix. 30

mission, "went to Tarsus for to seek him."* We cannot doubt but that the new apostle had been busied in his ministry; yet of what he did, or what he suffered, during this period, which may include three or four years, the history professes not to deliver any information. As Tarsus was situated upon the sea-coast, and as, though Tarsus was his home, yet it is probable he visited from thence many other places, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel, it is not unlikely, that, in the course of three or four years, he might undertake many short voyages to neighbouring countries, in the navigating of which we may be allowed to suppose that some of those disasters and shipwrecks befell him, to which he refers in the quotation before us, "thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep." This last clause I am inclined to interpret of his being obliged to take to an open boat, upon the loss of the ship, and his continuing out at sea, in that dangerous situation, a night and a day. St. Paul is here recounting his sufferings, not relating miracles. From Tarsus, Barnabas brought Paul to Antioch, and there he remained a year: but of the transactions of that year no other description is given than what is contained in the last four verses of the eleventh chapter. After a more solemn dedication to the ministry, Barnabas and Paul proceeded from Antioch to Cilicia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus, of which voyage no particulars are mentioned. Upon their return from Cyprus, they made a progress together through the Lesser Asia; and though two remarkable speeches be preserved, and a few incidents in the course of their travels circumstantially related, yet is the account of this progress, upon the whole, given professedly with conciseness; for instance, at Iconium it is said that they abode a long time;† yet of this long abode, except concerning the manner in which they were driven away, no memoir is inserted in the history. The whole is wrapped up in one short summary, "They spake boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands." Having completed their progress, the two apostles returned to Antioch, "and there they abode long time with the disciples." Here we have another large portion of time passed over in silence. To this succeeded a journey to Jerusalem, upon a dispute which then much agitated the Christian church, concerning the obligation of the law of Moses. When the object of that journey was completed, Paul proposed to Barnabas to go again and visit their brethren in every city where they had preached the word of the Lord. The execution of this plan carried our apostle through Syria, Cilicia, and many provinces of the Lesser Asia; yet is the account of the whole journey dispatched in four verses of the sixteenth chapter.

If the Acts of the Apostles had undertaken to exhibit regular annals of St. Paul's ministry, or, even any continued account of his life, from his conversion at Damascus to his imprisonment at Rome, I should have thought the omission of the circumstances referred to in our epistle, a matter of reasonable objection. But when it appears, from the history itself, that large portions of St. Paul's life were either passed over in silence, or only slightly touched upon, and that nothing more than certain detached incidents and discourses is related; when we observe also, that the author of the history did not join our apostle's society till a few years before the writing of the epistle, at least that there is no proof in the history that he did so, in comparing the history with the epistle, we shall not be surprised by the discovery of omissions; we shall ascribe it to truth that there is no contradiction.

No. X.

Chap. iii. 1. "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you?"

"As some others." Turn to Acts xviii. 27, and you will find that, a short time before the writing of that epistle, Apollos had gone to Corinth with letters of commendation from the Ephesian Christians; "and when Apollos was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him." Here the words of the epistle bear the appearance of alluding to some specific instance, and the history supplies that instance; it supplies at least an instance as apposite as possible to the terms which the apostle uses, and to the date and direction of the epistle, in which they are found. The letter which Apollos carried from Ephesus, was precisely the letter of commendation which St. Paul meant; and it was to Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital, and indeed to Corinth itself, (Acts, chap. xix. 1,) that Apollos carried it; and it was about two years before the writing of this epistle. If St. Paul's words be rather thought to refer to some general usage, which then obtained among Christian churches, the case of Apollos exemplifies that usage; and affords that species of confirmation to the epistle, which arises from seeing the manners of the age, in which it purports to be written, faithfully preserved.

No. XI.

Chap xiii. 1. "This is the third time I am coming to you:" τριτον τουτο ερχομαι.

Do not these words import that the writer had been at Corinth twice before? Yet, if they import this, they overset every congruity we have been endeavouring to establish. The Acts of the Apostles record only two journeys of St. Paul to Corinth. We have all along supposed, what every mark of time except this expression indicates, that this epistle was written between the first and second of these journeys. If St. Paul had been already twice at Corinth, this supposition must be given up; and every argument or observation which depends upon it falls to the ground. Again, the Acts of the Apostles not only record no more than two journeys of St. Paul to Corinth, but do not allow us to suppose that more than two such journeys could be made or intended by him within the period which the history comprises; for from his first journey into Greece to his first imprisonment at Rome, with which the history concludes, the apostle's time is accounted for. If therefore the epistle was written after the second journey to Corinth, and upon the view and expectation of a third, it must have been written after his first imprisonment at Rome. *i. e.* after the time to which the history extends. When I first read over this epistle with the particular view of comparing it with the history, which I chose to do without consulting any commentary whatever, I own that I

* Acts xi. 25. † Chap. xiv. 3.

felt myself confounded by this text. It appeared to contradict the opinion, which I had been led by a great variety of circumstances to form, concerning the date and occasion of the epistle. At length, however, it occurred to my thoughts to inquire, whether the passage did necessarily imply that St. Paul had been at Corinth twice; or, whether, when he says, "this is the third time I am coming to you," he might mean only that this was the third time that he was ready, that he was prepared, that he intended to set out upon his journey to Corinth. I recollected that he had once before this purposed to visit Corinth, and had been disappointed in this purpose; which disappointment forms the subject of much apology and protestation, in the first and second chapters of the epistle. Now, if the journey in which he had been disappointed was reckoned by him one of the times in which "he was coming to them," then the present would be the third time, *i. e.* of his being ready and prepared to come; although he had been actually at Corinth only *once* before. This conjecture being taken up, a farther examination of the passage and the epistle, produced proofs which placed it beyond doubt. "This is the third time I am coming to you:" in the verse following these words, he adds, "I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present *the second time;* and being absent, now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare." In this verse, the apostle is declaring beforehand what he would do in his intended visit; his expression therefore, "as if I were present the second time," relates to that visit. But, if his future visit would only make him present among them a second time, it follows that he had been already there but once. Again, in the fifteenth verse of the first chapter, he tells them, "In this confidence, I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a *second* benefit:" Why a second, and not a third benefit? why δευτεραν, and not τριτην χαριν, if the τριτον εξομαι in the fifteenth chapter, meant a *third* visit? for, though the visit in the first chapter be that visit in which he was disappointed, yet, as it is evident from the epistle that he had never been at Corinth from the time of the disappointment to the time of writing the epistle, it follows, that if it was only a second visit in which he was disappointed then, it could only be a second visit which he proposed now. But the text which I think is decisive of the question, if any question remain upon the subject, is the fourteenth verse of the twelfth chapter: "Behold the third time I am ready to come to you;" Ιδυ τριτον ετοιμως εχω ελθειν. It is very clear that the τριτον ετοιμως εχω ελθειν of the twelfth chapter, and the τριτον τυτο εξομαι of the thirteenth chapter, are equivalent expressions, were intended to convey the same meaning, and to relate to the same journey. The comparison of these phrases gives us St. Paul's own explanation of his own words; and it is that very explanation which we are contending for, viz. that τριτον τυτο εξομαι does not mean that he was coming a third time, but that this was the third time he was in readiness to come, τριτον ετοιμως εχων. I do not apprehend, that after this it can be necessary to call to our aid the reading of the Alexandrian manuscript, which gives ετοιμως εχω ελθειν in the thirteenth chapter as well as in the twelfth; or of the Syriac and Coptic versions, which follow that reading, because I allow, that the reading, besides not being sufficiently supported by ancient copies, is probably paraphrastical, and has been inserted for the purpose of expressing more unequivocally the sense, which the shorter expression τριτον τυτο εξομαι was supposed to carry. Upon the whole, the matter is sufficiently certain: nor do I propose it as a new interpretation of the text which contains the difficulty, for the same was given by Grotius long ago: but I thought it the clearest way of explaining the subject, to describe the manner in which the difficulty, the solution and the proofs of that solution, successively presented themselves to my inquiries. Now, in historical researches, a reconciled inconsistency becomes a positive argument. First, because an impostor generally guards against the appearance of inconsistency; and secondly, because, when apparent inconsistencies are found, it is seldom that any thing but truth renders them capable of reconciliation. The existence of the difficulty proves the want or absence of that caution, which usually accompanies the consciousness of fraud; and the solution proves, that it is not the collusion of fortuitous propositions which we have to deal with, but that a thread of truth winds through the whole, which preserves every circumstance in its place.

No. XII.

Chap. x. 14—16. "We are come as far as to you also, in preaching the Gospel of Christ; not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you, according to our rule, abundantly to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you."

This quotation affords an indirect, and therefore unsuspicious, but at the same time a distinct and indubitable recognition of the truth and exactness of the history. I consider it to be implied by the words of the quotation, that Corinth was the extremity of St. Paul's travels *hitherto.* He expresses to the Corinthians his hope, that in some future visit he might "preach the Gospel to the regions beyond them;" which imports that he had not hitherto proceeded "beyond them," but that Corinth was as yet the farthest point or boundary of his travels. Now, how is St. Paul's first journey into Europe, which was the only one he had taken before the writing of the epistle, traced out in the history? Sailing from Asia, he landed at Philippi: from Philippi, traversing the eastern coast of the peninsula, he passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica; from hence through Berea to Athens, and from Athens to Corinth, *where he stopped;* and from whence, after a residence of a year and a half, he sailed back into Syria. So that Corinth was the last place which he visited in the peninsula; was the place from which he returned into Asia; and was, as such, the boundary and limit of his progress. He could not have said the same thing, viz. "I hope hereafter to visit the regions beyond you," in an epistle to the Philippians, or in an epistle to the Thessalonians, inasmuch as he must be deemed to have already visited the regions beyond *them*, having proceeded from those cities to other parts of Greece. But from Corinth he returned home: every part therefore beyond that city, might properly be said, as it is said in the passage before us, to be unvisited. Yet is this propriety the spontaneous effect of truth, and produced without meditation or design.

CHAPTER V.

The Epistle to the Galatians.

No. I.

THE argument of this epistle in some measure proves its antiquity. It will hardly be doubted, but that it was written whilst the dispute concerning the circumcision of Gentile converts was fresh in men's minds: for, even supposing it to have been a forgery, the only credible motive that can be assigned for the forgery, was to bring the name and authority of the apostle into this controversy. No design could be so insipid, or so unlikely to enter into the thoughts of any man, as to produce an epistle written earnestly and pointedly upon one side of a controversy, when the controversy itself was dead, and the question no longer interesting to any description of readers whatever. Now the controversy concerning the circumcision of the Gentile Christians was of such a nature, that, if it arose at all, it must have arisen in the beginning of Christianity. As Judea was the scene of the Christian history; as the Author and preachers of Christianity were Jews; as the religion itself acknowledged and was founded upon the Jewish religion, in contra-distinction to every other religion then professed amongst mankind; it was not to be wondered at, that some of its teachers should carry it out in the world rather as a sect and modification of Judaism, than as a separate original revelation; or that they should invite their proselytes to those observances in which they lived themselves.—This was likely to happen: but if it did not happen *at first*; if, whilst the religion was in the hands of Jewish teachers, no such claim was advanced, no such condition was attempted to be imposed, it is not probable that the doctrine would be started, much less that it should prevail, in any future period. I likewise think, that those pretensions of Judaism were much more likely to be insisted upon, whilst the Jews continued a nation, than after their fall and dispersion; whilst Jerusalem and the temple stood, than after the destruction brought upon them by the Roman arms, the fatal cessation of the sacrifice and the priesthood, the humiliating loss of their country, and, with it, of the great rites and symbols of their institution. It should seem therefore, from the nature of the subject, and the situation of the parties, that this controversy was carried on in the interval between the preaching of Christianity to the Gentiles, and the invasion of Titus; and that our present epistle, which was undoubtedly intended to bear a part in this controversy, must be referred to the same period.

But, again, the epistle supposes that certain designing adherents of the Jewish law had crept into the churches of Galatia; and had been endeavouring, and but too successfully, to persuade the Galatic converts, that they had been taught the new religion imperfectly and at second hand; that the founder of their church himself possessed only an inferior and deputed commission, the seat of truth and authority being in the apostles and elders of Jerusalem; moreover, that whatever he might profess amongst them, he had himself at other times, and in other places, given way to the doctrine of circumcision. The epistle is unintelligible without supposing all this. Referring therefore to this, as to what had actually passed, we find St. Paul treating so unjust an attempt, to undermine his credit, and to introduce amongst his converts a doctrine which he had uniformly reprobated, in terms of great asperity and indignation. And in order to refute the suspicions which had been raised concerning the fidelity of his teaching, as well as to assert the independency and divine original of his mission, we find him appealing to the history of his conversion, to his conduct under it, to the manner in which he had conferred with the apostles when he met with them at Jerusalem: alleging, that so far was his doctrine from being derived from them, or they from exercising any superiority over him, that they had simply assented to what he had already preached amongst the Gentiles, and which preaching was communicated not by them to him, but by himself to them; that he had maintained the liberty of the Gentile church, by opposing, upon one occasion, an apostle to the face, when the timidity of his behaviour seemed to endanger it; that from the first, that all along, that to that hour, he had constantly resisted the claims of Judaism; and that the persecutions which he daily underwent, at the hands or by the instigation of the Jews, and of which he bore in his person the marks and scars, might have been avoided by him, if he had consented to employ his labours in bringing, through the medium of Christianity, converts over to the Jewish institution, for then "would the offence of the cross have ceased." Now an impostor who had forged the epistle for the purpose of producing St. Paul's authority in the dispute, which, as hath been observed, is the only credible motive that can be assigned for the forgery, might have made the apostle deliver his opinion upon the subject, in strong and decisive terms, or might have put his name to a train of reasoning and argumentation upon that side of the question which the imposture was intended to recommend. I can allow the possibility of such a scheme as that. But for a writer, with this purpose in view, to feign a series of transactions supposed to have passed amongst the Christians of Galatia, and then to counterfeit expressions of anger and resentment excited by these transactions; to make the apostle travel back into his own history, and into a recital of various passages of his life, some indeed directly, but others obliquely, and others even obscurely bearing upon the point in question; in a word, to substitute narrative for argument, expostulation and complaint for dogmatic positions and controversial reasoning, in a writing properly controversial, and of which the aim and design was to support one side of a much agitated question—is a method so intricate, and so unlike the methods pursued by all other impostors, as to require very flagrant proofs of imposition to induce us to believe it to be one.

No. II.

In this number I shall endeavour to prove,

1. That the Epistle to the Galatians, and the Acts of the Apostles, were written without any communication with each other.

2. That the Epistle, though written without any communication with the history, by recital, implication, or reference, bears testimony to many of the facts contained in it.

1. The Epistle and the Acts of the Apostles were written without any communication with each other.

To judge of this point, we must examine those passages in each, which describe the same transaction; for, if the author of either writing derived his information from the account which he had seen in the other, when he came to speak of the same transaction, he would follow that account. The history of St. Paul, at Damascus, as read in the Acts, and as referred to by the epistle, forms an instance of this sort. According to the Acts, Paul (after his conversion) was certain days with the "disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, is not this he which destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, confounding the Jews which were at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him. But their laying await was known of Saul; and they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples." Acts, chap. ix. 19—26.

According to the epistle, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his own Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus; then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem."

Beside the difference observable in the terms and general complexion of these two accounts, "the journey into Arabia," mentioned in the epistle, and omitted in the history, affords full proof that there existed no correspondence between these writers. If the narrative in the Acts had been made up from the epistle, it is impossible that this journey should have been passed over in silence; if the epistle had been composed out of what the author had read of St. Paul's history in the Acts, it is unaccountable that it should have been inserted*.

The journey to Jerusalem related in the second chapter of the Epistle ("then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem;") supplies another example of the same kind. Either this was the journey described in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, when Paul and Barnabas were sent from Antioch to Jerusalem, to consult the apostles and elders upon the question of the Gentile converts; or it was some journey of which the history does not take notice. If the first opinion be followed, the discrepancy in the two accounts is so considerable, that it is not without difficulty they can be adapted to the same transaction: so that upon this supposition, there is no place for suspecting that the writers were guided or assisted by each other. If the latter opinion be preferred, we have then a journey to Jerusalem, and a conference with the principal members of the church there, circumstantially related in the epistle, and entirely omitted in the Acts; and we are at liberty to repeat the observation, which we before made, that the omission of so material a fact in the history is inexplicable, if the historian had read the epistle; and that the insertion of it in the epistle, if the writer derived his information from the history, is not less so.

St. Peter's visit to Antioch, during which the dispute arose between him and St. Paul, is not mentioned in the Acts.

If we connect, with these instances, the general observation, that no scrutiny can discover the smallest trace of transcription or imitation either in things or words, we shall be fully satisfied in this part of our case; namely, that the two records, be the facts contained in them true or false, come to our hands from independent sources.

Secondly, I say that the epistle, thus proved to have been written without any communication with the history, bears testimony to a great variety of particulars contained in the history.

1. St. Paul, in the early part of his life, had addicted himself to the study of the Jewish religion, and was distinguished by his zeal for the institution and for the traditions which had been incorporated with it. Upon this part of his character the history makes St. Paul speak thus: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers; and was zealous towards God, as ye all are this day." Acts, chap. xxii. 3.

The epistle is as follows: "I profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." Chap. i. 14.

2. St. Paul, before his conversion, had been a fierce persecutor of the new sect. "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church; entering into every house, and, haling men and women, committed them to prison." Acts, chap. viii. 3.

This is the history of St. Paul, as delivered in the Acts: in the recital of his own history in the epistle, "Ye have heard," says he, "of my conversation in times past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God." Chap. i. 13.

3. St. Paul was miraculously converted on his way to Damascus. "And as he journeyed he came near to Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts, chap. ix. 3—6. With these compare the epistle, chap. i. 15—17: "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them that were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."

* N. B. The Acts of the Apostles simply inform us that St. Paul left Damascus in order to go to Jerusalem, "after many days were fulfilled." If any one doubt whether the words "many days" could be intended to express a period which included a term of three years, he will find a complete instance of the same phrase used with the same latitude in the first book of Kings, chap. xi. 38, 39. "And Shimei dwelt at Jerusalem *many days*: and it came to pass at the end of *three years*, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away."

In this quotation from the epistle, I desire it to be remarked how incidentally it appears, that the affair passed at *Damascus*. In what may be called the direct part of the account, no mention is made of the place of his conversion at all: a casual expression at the end, and an expression brought in for a different purpose, alone fixes it to have been at Damascus; "I returned again to Damascus." Nothing can be more like simplicity and undesignedness than this is. It also draws the agreement between the two quotations somewhat closer, to observe that they both state St. Paul to have preached the gospel immediately upon his call: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God," Acts, chap. ix. 20. "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Gal. chap. i. 15.

4. The course of the apostle's travels after his conversion was this: he went from Damascus to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem into Syria and Cilicia. "At Damascus the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket; and when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he essayed to join himself to the disciples," Acts, chap. ix. 25. Afterwards, "when the brethren knew the conspiracy formed against him at Jerusalem, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus, a city in Cilicia," chap. ix. 30. In the epistle, St. Paul gives the following brief account of his proceedings within the same period: "After three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days; afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia." The history had told us that Paul passed from Cæsarea to Tarsus: if he took his journey by land, it would carry him through Syria into Cilicia; and he would come after his visit at Jerusalem, "into the regions of Syria and Cilicia," in the very order in which he mentions them in the epistle. This supposition of his going from Cæsarea to Tarsus, *by land*, clears up also another point. It accounts for what St. Paul says in the same place concerning the churches of Judea: "Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea, which were in Christ: but they had heard only that he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith, which once he destroyed; and they glorified God in me." Upon which passage I observe, first, that what is here said of the churches of Judea, is spoken in connexion with his journey into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Secondly, that the passage itself has little significancy, and that the *connexion* is inexplicable, unless St. Paul went through Judea* (though probably by a hasty journey) at the time that he came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Suppose him to have passed by land from Cæsarea to Tarsus, all this, as hath been observed, would be precisely true.

5. Barnabas was with St. Paul at Antioch. "Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church," Acts, chap. xi. 25, 26. Again, and upon another occasion, "they (Paul and Barnabas) sailed to Antioch: and there they continued a long time with the disciples." Chap. xiv. 26.

Now what says the epistle? "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed; and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." Chap. ii. 11, 13.

6. The stated residence of the apostles was at Jerusalem. "At that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles," Acts, chap. viii. 1. "They (the Christians at Antioch) determined that Paul and Barnabas should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question," Acts, chap. xv. 2. With these accounts agrees the declaration in the epistle: "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me," chap. i. 17: for this declaration implies, or rather assumes it to be known, that Jerusalem was the place where the apostles were to be met with.

7. There were at Jerusalem two apostles, or at least two eminent members of the church, of the name of James. This is directly inferred from the Acts of the Apostles, which in the second verse of the twelfth chapter relates the death of James, the brother of John; and yet in the fifteenth chapter, and in a subsequent part of the history, records a speech delivered by James in the assembly of the apostles and elders. It is also strongly implied by the form of expression used in the epistle: "Other apostles saw I none, save James, the *Lord's brother;*" *i. e.* to distinguish him from James the brother of John.

To us who have been long conversant in the Christian history, as contained in the Acts of the Apostles, these points are obvious and familiar; nor do we readily apprehend any greater difficulty in making them appear in a letter purporting to have been written by St. Paul, than there is in introducing them into a modern sermon. But, to judge correctly of the argument before us, we must discharge this knowledge from our thoughts. We must propose to ourselves the situation of an author who sat down to the writing of the epistle without having seen the history; and then the concurrences we have deduced will be deemed of importance. They will at least be taken for separate confirmations of the several facts, and not only of these particular facts, but of the general truth of the history.

For, what is the rule with respect to corroborative testimony which prevails in courts of justice, and which prevails only because experience has proved that it is a useful guide to truth? A principal witness in a cause delivers his account: his narrative, in certain parts of it, is confirmed by witnesses who are called afterwards. The credit derived from their testimony belongs not only to the particular circumstances in which the auxiliary witnesses agree with the principal witness, but in some measure to the whole of his evidence; because it is improbable that accident or fiction should draw a line which touched upon truth in so many points.

In like manner, if two records be produced, manifestly independent, that is, manifestly written

* Dr. Doddridge thought that the Cæsarea here mentioned was not the celebrated city of that name upon the Mediterranean sea, but Cæsarea Philippi, near the borders of Syria, which lies in a much more direct line from Jerusalem to Tarsus than the other. The objection to this, Dr. Benson remarks, is, that Cæsarea without any addition, usually denotes Cæsarea Palestinæ.

without any participation of intelligence, an agreement between them, even in few and slight circumstances (especially if from the different nature and design of the writings, few points only of agreement, and those incidental, could be expected to occur,) would add a sensible weight to the authority of both, in every part of their contents.

The same rule is applicable to history, with at least as much reason as any other species of evidence.

No. III.

But although the references to various particulars in the epistle, compared with the direct account of the same particulars in the history, afford a considerable proof of the truth, not only of these particulars but of the narrative which contains them; yet they do not show, it will be said, that the epistle was written by St. Paul: for admitting, (what seems to have been proved,) that the writer, whoever he was, had no recourse to the Acts of the Apostles, yet many of the facts referred to, such as St. Paul's miraculous conversion, his change from a virulent persecutor to an indefatigable preacher, his labours amongst the Gentiles, and his zeal for the liberties of the Gentile church, were so notorious as to occur readily to the mind of any Christian, who should choose to personate his character, and counterfeit his name; it was only to write what every body knew. Now I think that this supposition—viz. that the epistle was composed upon general information, and the general publicity of the facts alluded to, and that the author did no more than weave into his work what the common fame of the Christian church had reported to his ears—is repelled by the particularity of the recitals and references. This particularity is observable in the following instances, in perusing which, I desire the reader to reflect, whether they exhibit the language of a man who had nothing but general reputation to proceed upon, or of a man actually speaking of himself and of his own history, and consequently of things concerning which he possessed a clear, intimate, and circumstantial knowledge.

1. The history, in giving an account of St. Paul after his conversion, relates, "that, after many days," effecting, by the assistance of the disciples, his escape from Damascus, "he proceeded to Jerusalem," Acts, chap. ix. 25. The epistle, speaking of the same period, makes St. Paul say, that "he went into Arabia," that he returned again to Damascus, that after three years he went up to Jerusalem. Chap. i. 17, 18.

2. The history relates, that when Saul was come from Damascus, "he was with the disciples coming in and going out," Acts, chap. ix. 28. The epistle, describing the same journey, tells us, "that he went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days," chap. i. 18.

3. The history relates, that when Paul was come to Jerusalem, "Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles," Acts, chap. ix. 27. The epistle, "that he saw Peter; but other of the apostles, saw he none, save James, the Lord's brother," chap. i. 19.

Now this is as it should be. The historian delivers his account in general terms, as of facts to which he was not present. The person who is the subject of that account, when he comes to speak of these facts himself, particularises time, names, and circumstances.

4. The like notation of places, persons, and dates, is met with in the account of St. Paul's journey to Jerusalem, given in the second chapter of the epistle. It was fourteen years after his conversion; it was in company with Barnabas and Titus; it was then that he met with James, Cephas, and John; it was then also that it was agreed amongst them, that they should go to the circumcision, and he unto the Gentiles.

5. The dispute with Peter, which occupies the sequel of the second chapter, is marked with the same particularity. It was at Antioch; it was after certain came from James; it was whilst Barnabas was there, who was carried away by their dissimulation. These examples negative the insinuation, that the epistle presents nothing but indefinite allusions to public facts.

No. IV.

Chap. iv. 11—16. "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am, for I am as ye are. Ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel unto you at the first; and *my temptation, which was in the flesh*, ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness you spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them unto me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

With this passage compare 2 Cor. chap. xii. 1—9: "It is not expedient for me, doubtless, to glory; I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth;) such a one was caught up to the third heaven: and I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth,) how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one will I glory, yet of myself will I not glory, but in mine infirmities: for, though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth. But now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me *a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me*, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

There can be no doubt but that "the temptation which was in the flesh," mentioned in the Epistle to the Galatians, and "the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him," mentioned in the Epistle to the Corinthians, were intended to denote the same thing. Either, therefore, it was what we pretend it to have been, the same person in both, alluding, as the occasion led him, to some bodily infirmity under which he laboured; that is, we are reading the real letters of a real apostle; or, it was that a sophist, who had seen the circumstance in one epistle, contrived, for

the sake of correspondency, to bring it into another; or, lastly, it was a circumstance in St. Paul's personal condition, supposed to be well known to those into whose hands the epistle was likely to fall; and for that reason, introduced into a writing designed to bear his name. I have extracted the quotations at length, in order to enable the reader to judge accurately of the manner in which the mention of this particular comes in, in each; because that judgment, I think, will acquit the author of the epistle of the charge of having studiously inserted it, either with a view of producing an apparent agreement between, or for any other purpose whatever.

The context, by which the circumstance before us is introduced, is in the two places totally different, and without any mark of imitation: yet in both places does the circumstance rise aptly and naturally out of the context, and that context from the train of thought carried on in the epistle.

The Epistle to the Galatians, from the beginning to the end, runs in a strain of angry complaint of their defection from the apostle, and from the principles which he had taught them. It was very natural to contrast with this conduct, the zeal with which they had once received him; and it was not less so to mention, as a proof of their former disposition towards him, the indulgence which, whilst he was amongst them, they had shown to his infirmity; "My temptation which was in the flesh, ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness you spake of," *i. e.* the benedictions which you bestowed upon me? "for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me."

In the two epistles to the Corinthians, especially in the second, we have the apostle contending with certain teachers in Corinth, who had formed a party in that church against him. To vindicate his personal authority, as well as the dignity and credit of his ministry amongst them, he takes occasion (but not without apologising repeatedly for the folly, that is, for the indecorum of pronouncing his own panegyric,*) to meet his adversaries in their boastings: "Whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they the ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft." Being led to the subject, he goes on, as was natural, to recount his trials and dangers, his incessant cares and labours in the Christian mission. From the proofs which he had given of his zeal and activity in the service of Christ, he passes (and that with the same view of establishing his claim to be considered as "not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles,") to the visions and revelations which from time to time have been vouchsafed to him. And then, by a close and easy connexion, comes in the mention of his infirmity: "Lest I should be exalted," says he, "above measure, through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me."

Thus then, in both epistles, the notice of his infirmity is suited to the place in which it is found. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, the train of thought draws up to the circumstance by a regular approximation. In this epistle, it is suggested by the subject and occasion of the epistle itself. Which observation we offer as an argument to prove that it is not, in either epistle, a circumstance industriously brought forward for the sake of procuring credit to an imposture.

A reader will be taught to perceive the force of this argument, who shall attempt to introduce a *given* circumstance into the body of a writing. To do this without abruptness, or without betraying marks of design in the transition, requires, he will find, more art than he expected to be necessary, certainly more than any one can believe to have been exercised in the composition of these epistles.

No. V.

Chap. iv. 29. "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now."

Chap. v. 11. "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offence of the cross ceased."

Chap. vi. 17. "From henceforth, let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

From these several texts, it is apparent that the persecutions which our apostle had undergone, were from the hands or by the instigation of the Jews; that it was not for preaching Christianity in opposition to heathenism, but it was for preaching it as distinct from Judaism, that he had brought upon himself the sufferings which had attended his ministry. And this representation perfectly coincides with that which results from the detail of St. Paul's history, as delivered in the Acts. At Antioch, in Pisidia, the "word of the Lord was published throughout all the region: but the *Jews stirred up* the devout and honourable women and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts," Acts, chap. xiii. 50. Not long after, at Iconium, "a great multitude of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed; but the *unbelieving Jews* stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren," chap. xiv. 1, 2. "At Lystra there came certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people; and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead," chap. xiv. 19. The same enmity, and from the same quarter, our apostle experienced in Greece: "At Thessalonica, some of them (the Jews) believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas: and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few: but *the Jews which believed not*, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people," Acts, chap. xvii. 4, 5. Their persecutors follow them to Berea: "When the *Jews* of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people," chap. xxii. 13. And

* "Would to God you would bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me! chap. xi. 1.

"That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting," chap. xi. 17.

"I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me," chap. xii. 11.

lastly at Corinth, when Gallio was deputy of Achaia, "*the Jews* made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat." I think it does not appear that our apostle was ever set upon by the Gentiles, unless they were first stirred up by the Jews, except in two instances; in both which the persons who began the assault were immediately interested in his expulsion from the place. Once this happened at Philippi, after the cure of the Pythoness: "When the masters saw the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place unto the rulers," chap. xvi. 19. And a second time at Ephesus, at the instance of Demetrius, a silversmith which made silver shrines for Diana, "who called together workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth; moreover ye see and hear, that not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded away much people, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands; so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth."

No. VI.

I observe an agreement in a somewhat peculiar rule of Christian conduct, as laid down in this epistle, and as exemplified in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. It is not the repetition of the same general precept, which would have been a coincidence of little value; but it is the general precept in one place, and the application of that precept to an actual occurrence in the other. In the sixth chapter and first verse of this epistle, our apostle gives the following direction: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness." In 2 Cor. chap. ii. 6—8, he writes thus: "Sufficient to such a man" (the incestuous person mentioned in the First Epistle,) "is this punishment, which was inflicted of many: so that, contrariwise, ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow; wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love towards him." I have little doubt but that it was the same mind which dictated these two passages.

No. VII.

Our epistle goes farther than any of St. Paul's epistles; for it avows, in direct terms, the supersession of the Jewish law, as an instrument of salvation, even to the Jews themselves. Not only were the Gentiles exempt from its authority, but even the Jews were no longer either to place any dependency upon it, or consider themselves as subject to it on a religious account. Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed; wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but, after that faith is come, *we are no longer under a schoolmaster*," chap. iii. 23—25. This was undoubtedly spoken of Jews, and to Jews. In like manner, chap. iv. 1—5: "Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father: even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to *redeem them that were under the law*, that we might receive the adoption of sons." These passages are nothing short of a declaration, that the obligation of the Jewish law, considered as a religious dispensation, the effects of which were to take place in another life, had ceased, with respect even to the Jews themselves. What then should be the conduct of a Jew, (for such St. Paul was,) who preached this doctrine? To be consistent with himself, either he would no longer comply, in his own person, with the directions of the law; or, if he did comply, it would be for some other reason than any confidence which he placed in its efficacy, as a religious institution. Now so it happens, that whenever St. Paul's compliance with the Jewish law is mentioned in the history, it is mentioned in connexion with circumstances which point out the motive from which it proceeded; and this motive appears to have been always exoteric, namely, a love of order and tranquillity, or an unwillingness to give unnecessary offence. Thus, Acts, chap. xvi. 3: "Him (Timothy,) would Paul have to go forth with him, and took and circumcised him, *because of the Jews which were in those quarters*. Again, Acts, chap. xxi. 26, when Paul consented to exhibit an example of public compliance with a Jewish rite by purifying himself in the temple, it is plainly intimated that he did this to satisfy "many thousands of Jews who believed, and who were all zealous of the law." So far the instances related in one book, correspond with the doctrine delivered in another.

No. VIII.

Chap. i. 18. "Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."

The shortness of St. Paul's stay at Jerusalem is what I desire the reader to remark. The direct account of the same journey in the Acts, chap. ix. 28, determines nothing concerning the time of his continuance there: "And he was with them (the apostles) coming in, and going out, at Jerusalem; and he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him; which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea." Or rather this account, taken by itself, would lead a reader to suppose that St. Paul's abode at Jerusalem had been longer than fifteen days. But turn to the twenty-second chapter of the Acts, and you will find a reference to this visit to Jerusalem, which plainly indicates that Paul's continuance in that city had been of short duration: "And it came to pass, that when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance, and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." Here we have the general terms of one text so explained by a distant text in the same book, as to bring an indeterminate expression into a close conformity with a specification delivered in another book: a species of consistency not, I think, usually found in fabulous relations.

No. IX.

Chap. vi. 11. "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand."

These words imply that he did not always write with his own hand; which is consonant to what we find intimated in some other of the epistles. The Epistle to the Romans was written by Tertius: "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord," chap. xvi. 22. The First Epistle to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Colossians, and the Second to the Thessalonians, have all, near the conclusion, this clause, "The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand;" which must be understood, and is universally understood to import, that the rest of the epistle was written by another hand. I do not think it improbable that an impostor, who had remarked this subscription in some other epistle, should invent the same in a forgery; but that is not done here. The author of this epistle does not imitate the manner of giving St. Paul's signature; he only bids the Galatians observe how large a letter he had written to them with his own hand. He does not say this was different from his ordinary usage; that is left to implication. Now to suppose that this was an artifice to procure credit to an imposture, is to suppose that the author of the forgery, because he knew that others of St. Paul's were *not* written by himself, therefore made the apostle say that this was: which seems an odd turn to give to the circumstance, and to be given for a purpose which would more naturally and more directly have been answered, by subjoining the salutation or signature in the form in which it is found in other epistles.*

No. X.

An exact conformity appears in the manner in which a certain apostle or eminent Christian, whose name was James, is spoken of in the epistle and in the history. Both writings refer to a situation of his at Jerusalem, somewhat different from that of the other apostles; a kind of eminence or presidency in the church there, or at least a more fixed and stationary residence. Chap. ii. 12: "When Peter was at Antioch, before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles." This text plainly attributes a kind of pre-eminency to James: and, as we hear of him twice in the same epistle dwelling at Jerusalem, chap. i. 19, and ii. 9, we must apply it to the situation which he held in that church. In the Acts of the Apostles divers intimations occur, conveying the same idea of James's situation. When Peter was miraculously delivered from prison, and had surprised his friends by his appearance among them, after declaring unto them how the Lord had brought him out of prison, "Go show," says he, "these things unto James, and to the brethren," Acts, chap. xii. 17. Here James is manifestly spoken of in terms of distinction. He appears again with like distinction in the twenty-first chapter and the seventeenth and eighteenth verses: "And when we (Paul and his company) were come to Jerusalem, the day following, Paul went in with us unto James, and all the elders were present." In the debate which took place upon the business of the Gentile converts, in the council at Jerusalem, this same person seems to have taken the lead. It was he who closed the debate, and proposed the resolution in which the council ultimately concurred: "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God."

Upon the whole, that there exists a conformity in the expressions used concerning *James* throughout the history, and in the epistle, is unquestionable. But admitting this conformity, and admitting also the undesignedness of it, what does it prove? It proves that the circumstance itself is founded in truth; that is, that James was a real person, who held a situation of eminence in a real society of Christians at Jerusalem. It confirms also those parts of the narrative which are connected with this circumstance. Suppose, for instance, the truth of the account of Peter's escape from prison was to be tried upon the testimony of a witness who, among other things, made Peter, after his deliverance, say, "Go show these things to James and to the brethren;" would it not be material, in such a trial, to make out by other independent proofs, or by a comparison of proofs, drawn from independent sources, that there was actually at that time, living at Jerusalem, such a person as James; that this person held such a situation in the society amongst whom these things were transacted, as to render the words which Peter is said to have used concerning him, proper and natural for him to have used? If this would be pertinent in the discussion of oral testimony, it is still more so in appreciating the credit of remote history.

It must not be dissembled, that the comparison of our epistle with the history presents some difficulties, or, to say the least, some questions of considerable magnitude. It may be doubted, in the first place, to what journey the words which open the second chapter of the epistle, "then, fourteen years afterwards, I went unto Jerusalem," relate. That which best corresponds with the date, and that to which most interpreters apply the passage, is the journey of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem when they went thither from Antioch upon the business of the Gentile converts; and which journey produced the famous council and decree recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. To me this opinion appears to be encumbered with strong objections. In the epistle Paul tells us that "he went up by revelation," chap. ii. 2. In the Acts, we read that he was sent by the church of Antioch: "after no small dissension and disputation, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to the apostles and elders about this question," Acts, chap. xv. 2. This is not very reconcileable. In the epistle, St. Paul writes that, when he came to Jerusalem, "he communicated that Gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation," chap. ii. 2. If by "that Gospel" he meant the immunity of the Gentile Christians from the Jewish law, (and I know not what else it can mean,) it is not easy to conceive how he should communicate that privately, which was the object of his public message. But a yet greater difficulty remains, viz. that in the account which the epistle gives of what passed upon this

* The words πηλικοις γραμμασιν may probably be meant to describe the character in which he wrote, and not the length of the letter. But this will not alter the truth of our observation. I think, however, that as St. Paul, by the mention of his own hand, designed to express to the Galatians the great concern which he felt for them, the words, whatever they signify, belong to the whole of the epistle; and not, as Grotius, after St. Jerome, interprets it, to the few verses which follow.

visit at Jerusalem, no notice is taken of the deliberation and decree which are recorded in the Acts, and which, according to that history, formed the business for the sake of which the journey was undertaken. The mention of the council and of its determination, whilst the apostle was relating his proceedings at Jerusalem, could hardly have been avoided, if in truth the narrative belong to the same journey. To me it appears more probable that Paul and Barnabas had taken some journey to Jerusalem, the mention of which is omitted in the Acts. Prior to the apostolic decree, we read that "Paul and Barnabas abode at Antioch a long time with the disciples," Acts chap. xiv. 28. Is it unlikely that, during this long abode, they might go up to Jerusalem and return to Antioch? Or would the omission of such a journey be unsuitable to the general brevity with which these memoirs are written, especially of those parts of St. Paul's history which took place before the historian joined his society?

But, again, the first account we find in the Acts of the Apostles of St. Paul's visiting Galatia, is in the sixteenth chapter and the sixth verse: "Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they assayed to go into Bithynia." The progress here recorded was subsequent to the apostolic decree; therefore that decree must have been extant when our epistle was written. Now, as the professed design of the epistle was to establish the exemption of the Gentile converts from the law of Moses, and as the decree pronounced and confirmed that exemption, it may seem extraordinary that no notice whatever is taken of that determination, nor any appeal made to its authority. Much however of the weight of this objection, which applies also to some other of St. Paul's epistles, is removed by the following reflections.

1. It was not St. Paul's manner, nor agreeable to it, to resort or defer much to the authority of the other apostles, especially whilst he was insisting, as he does strenuously throughout this epistle insist, upon his own original inspiration. He who could speak of the very chiefest of the apostles in such terms as the following—"of those who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's person,) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me,"—he, I say, was not likely to support himself by their decision.

2. The epistle argues the point upon principle: and it is not perhaps more to be wondered at, that in such an argument St. Paul should not cite the apostolic decree, than it would be that, in a discourse designed to prove the moral and religious duty of observing the Sabbath, the writer should not quote the thirteenth canon.

3. The decree did not go the length of the position maintained in the epistle; the decree only declares that the apostles and elders at Jerusalem did not impose the observance of the Mosaic law upon the Gentile converts, as a condition of their being admitted into the Christian church. Our epistle argues that the Mosaic institution itself was at an end, as to all effects upon a future state, even with respect to the Jews themselves.

4. They whose error St. Paul combated, were not persons who submitted to the Jewish law, because it was imposed by the authority, or because it was made part of the law of the Christian church; but they were persons who, having already become Christians, afterwards voluntarily took upon themselves the observance of the Mosaic code, under a notion of attaining thereby to a greater perfection. This, I think, is precisely the opinion which St. Paul opposes in this epistle. Many of his expressions apply exactly to it: "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect in the flesh?" chap. iii. 3. "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" chap. iv. 21. "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" chap. iv. 9. It cannot be thought extraordinary that St. Paul should resist this opinion with earnestness; for it both changed the character of the Christian dispensation, and derogated expressly from the completeness of that redemption which Jesus Christ had wrought for them that believed in him. But it was to no purpose to allege to such persons the decision at Jerusalem; for that only showed that they were not bound to these observances by any law of the Christian church; they did not pretend to be so bound; nevertheless they imagined that there was an efficacy in these observances, a merit, a recommendation to favour, and a ground of acceptance with God for those who complied with them. This was a situation of thought to which the tenor of the decree did not apply. Accordingly, St. Paul's address to the Galatians, which is throughout adapted to this situation, runs in a strain widely different from the language of the decree: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law;" chap. v. 4; *i. e.* whosoever places his dependence upon any merit he may apprehend there to be in legal observances. The decree had said nothing like this; therefore it would have been useless to have produced the decree in an argument of which this was the burden. In like manner as in contending with an anchorite, who should insist upon the superior holiness of a recluse, ascetic life, and the value of such mortifications in the sight of God, it would be to no purpose to prove that the laws of the church did not require these vows, or even to prove that the laws of the church expressly left every Christian to his liberty. This would avail little towards abating his estimation of their merit, or towards settling the point in controversy.*

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* Mr. Locke's solution of this difficulty is by no means satisfactory. "St. Paul," he says, "did not remind the Galatians of the apostolic decree, because they already had it." In the first place, it does not appear with certainty that they had it; in the second place, if they had it, this was rather a reason, than otherwise, for referring them to it. The passage in the Acts, from which Mr. Locke concludes that the Galatic churches were in possession of the decree, is the fourth verse of the sixteenth chapter: "And as they" (Paul and Timothy) "went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem." In my opinion, this delivery of the decree was confined to the churches to which St. Paul came, in pursuance of the plan upon which he set out, "of visiting the brethren in every city where he had preached the word of the Lord;" the history of which progress, and of all that pertained to it, is closed in the fifth verse, when the history informs that, "so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." Then the history proceeds upon a new section of the narrative, by telling us, that "when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they assayed to go into Bithynia." The decree itself is directed to "the brethren which

Another difficulty arises from the account of Peter's conduct towards the Gentile converts at Antioch, as given in the epistle, in the latter part of the second chapter; which conduct, it is said, is consistent neither with the revelation communicated to him upon the conversion of Cornelius, nor with the part he took in the debate at Jerusalem. But, in order to understand either the difficulty or the solution, it will be necessary to state and explain the passage itself. "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed; for, before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision; and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation; but when I saw they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter, before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Now the question that produced the dispute to which these words relate, was not whether the Gentiles were capable of being admitted into the Christian covenant; that had been fully settled: nor was it whether it should be accounted essential to the profession of Christianity that they should conform themselves to the law of Moses; that was the question at Jerusalem: but it was, whether, upon the Gentiles becoming Christians, the Jews might henceforth eat and drink with them, as with their own brethren. Upon this point St. Peter betrayed some inconstancy; and so he might, agreeably enough to his history.—He might consider the vision at Joppa as a direction for the occasion, rather than as universally abolishing the distinction between Jew and Gentile; I do not mean with respect to final acceptance with God, but as to the manner of their living together in society: at least he might not have comprehended this point with such clearness and certainty, as to stand out upon it against the fear of bringing upon himself the censure and complaint of his brethren in the church of Jerusalem, who still adhered to their ancient prejudices. But Peter, it is said, compelled the Gentiles Ιουδαιζειν—"Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" How did he do that? The only way in which Peter appears to have compelled the Gentiles to comply with the Jewish institution, was by withdrawing himself from their society. By which he may be understood to have made this declaration: "We do not deny your right to be considered as Christians; we do not deny your title in the promises of the Gospel, even without compliance with our law: but if you would have us Jews live with you as we do with one another; that is, if you would in all respects be treated by us as Jews, you must live as such yourselves." This, I think, was the compulsion which St. Peter's conduct imposed upon the Gentiles, and for which St. Paul reproved him.

As to the part which the historian ascribes to St. Peter in the debate at Jerusalem, besides that it was a different question which was there agitated from that which produced the dispute at Antioch, there is nothing to hinder us from supposing that the dispute at Antioch was prior to the consultation at Jerusalem; or that Peter, in consequence of this rebuke, might have afterwards maintained firmer sentiments.

CHAPTER VI.

The Epistle to the Ephesians.

No. I.

This epistle, and the Epistle to the Colossians, appear to have been transmitted to their respective churches by the same messenger: "But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things; whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts," Ephes. chap. vi. 21, 22. This text, if it do not expressly declare, clearly I think intimates, that the letter was sent by Tychicus. The words made use of in the Epistle to the Colossians are very similar to these, and afford the same implication that Tychicus, in conjunction with Onesimus, was the bearer of the letter to that church; "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord; whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here," Colos. chap. iv. 7—9. Both epistles represent the writer as under imprisonment for the Gospel; and both treat of the same general subject. The Epistle therefore to the Ephesians, and the Epistle to the Colossians, import to be two letters written by the same person, at or nearly at the same time, and upon the same subject, and to have been sent by the same messenger. Now, every thing in the sentiments, order, and diction

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are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, that is, to churches already founded, and in which this question had been stirred. And I think the observation of the noble author of the Miscellanea Sacra is not only ingenious but highly probable, viz that there is, in this place a dislocation of the text, and that the fourth and fifth verses of the sixteenth chapter ought to follow the last verse of the fifteenth, so as to make the entire passage run thus: "And they went through Syria and Cilicia," (to the Christians of which country the decree was addressed) "confirming the churches; and as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem; and so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." And then the sixteenth chapter takes up a new and unbroken paragraph: "Then came he to Derbe and Lystra, &c." When St. Paul came, as he did into Galatia, to preach the Gospel, for the first time, in a new place, it is not probable that he would make mention of the decree, or rather letter, of the church of Jerusalem, which presupposed Christianity to be known, and which related to certain doubts that had arisen in some established Christian communities.

The second reason which Mr. Locke assigns for the omission of the decree, viz. "that St. Paul's sole object in the epistle was to acquit himself of the imputation that had been charged upon him of actually preaching circumcision," does not appear to me to be strictly true. It was not the sole object. The epistle is written in general opposition to the Judaizing inclinations which he found to prevail among his converts. The avowal of his own doctrine, and of his steadfast adherence to that doctrine, formed a necessary part of the design of his letter, but was not the whole of it.

of the two writings, correspond with what might be expected from this circumstance of identity or cognation in their original. The leading doctrine of both epistles is the union of Jews and Gentiles under the Christian dispensation; and that doctrine in both is established by the same arguments or, more properly speaking, illustrated by the same similitudes:* "one head," "one body," "one new man," "one temple," are in both epistles the figures under which the society of believers in Christ, and their common relation to him as such, is represented.† The ancient, and, as had been thought, the indelible distinction between Jew and Gentile, in both epistles, is declared to be "now abolished by his cross." Besides this consent in the general tenor of the two epistles, and in the run also and warmth of thought with which they are composed, we may naturally expect in letters produced under the circumstances in which these appear to have been written, a closer resemblance of style and diction, than between other letters of the same person but of distant dates, or between letters adapted to different occasions. In particular, we may look for many of the same expressions, and sometimes for whole sentences being alike; since such expressions and sentences would be repeated in the second letter (whichever that was) as yet fresh in the author's mind from the writing of the first. This repetition occurs in the following examples:‡

Ephes. ch. i. 7. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."§

Colos. ch. i. 14. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."‖

Besides the sameness of the words, it is farther remarkable that the sentence is, in both places, preceded by the same introductory idea. In the Epistle to the Ephesians it is the "*beloved*" (ηγαπημενω); in that to the Colossians it is "*his dear Son*" (υιου της αγαπης αυτου,) "in whom we have redemption."—The sentence appears to have been suggested to the mind of the writer by the idea which had accompanied it before.

Ephes. ch. i. 10. "All things both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in him."*

Colos. ch. i. 20. "All things by him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."†

This quotation is the more observable, because the connecting of things in earth with things in heaven is a very singular sentiment, and found no where else but in these two epistles. The words also are introduced and followed by a train of thought nearly alike. They are introduced by describing the union which Christ had effected, and they are followed by telling the Gentile churches that they were incorporated into it.

Ephes. ch. iii. 2. "The dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you ward."‡

Colos. ch. i. 25. "The dispensation of God which is given to me for you."§

Of these sentences it may likewise be observed that the accompanying ideas are similar. In both places they are immediately preceded by the mention of his present sufferings; in both places they are immediately followed by the mention of the mystery which was the great subject of his preaching.

Ephes. ch. v. 19. "In psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."‖

Colos. ch. iii. 16. "In psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."¶

Ephes. ch. vi. 22. "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts."**

Colos. ch. iv. 8. "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate and comfort your hearts."††

In these examples, we do not perceive a cento of phrases gathered from one composition, and strung together in the other; but the occasional occurrence of the same expression to a mind a second time revolving the same ideas.

2. Whoever writes two letters, or two discourses, nearly upon the same subject, and at no great distance of time, but without any express recollection of what he had written before, will find himself repeating some sentences, in the very order of the words in which he had already used them; but he will more frequently find himself employing some principal terms, with the order inadvertently changed, or with the order disturbed by the intermixture of other words and phrases expressive of ideas rising up at the time; or in many instances repeating not single words, nor yet whole sentences, but parts and fragments of

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* St. Paul, I am apt to believe, has been sometimes accused of inconclusive reasoning, by our mistaking that for reasoning which was only intended for illustration. He is not to be read as a man, whose own persuasion of the truth of what he taught always or solely depended upon the views under which he represents it in his writings. Taking for granted the certainty of his doctrine, as resting upon the revelation that had been imparted to him, he exhibits it frequently to the conception of his readers under images and allegories, in which if an analogy may be perceived, or even sometimes a poetic resemblance be found, it is all perhaps that is required.

Compare	Ephes. i. 22, iv. 15, ii. 15,	with	Colos. i. 18. ii. 19. iii. 10, 11.	
Also	Ephes. ii. 14, 15, ii. 16, ii. 20,	with	Colos. ii. 14. i. 18—21. ii. 7.	

† When *verbal* comparisons are relied upon, it becomes necessary to state the original; but that the English reader may be interrupted as little as may be, I shall in general do this in the notes.

§ Ephes. ch. i. 7 Εν ω εχομεν την απολυτρωσιν δια του αιματος αυτου, την αφεσιν των παραπτωματων.

‖ Colos ch. i. 14. Εν ω εχομεν την απολυτρωσιν δια του αιματος αυτου, την αφεσιν των αμαρτιων.—However it must be observed, that in this latter text many copies have not δια του αιματος αυτου.

* Ephes ch. i. 10. Τα τε εν τοις ουρανοις και τα επι της γης, εν αυτω.

† Colos. ch. i. 20. Δι αυτου, ειτε τα επι της γης, ειτε τα εν τοις ουρανοις.

‡ Ephes ch. iii. 2. Την οικονομιαν χαριτος του Θεου της δοθειστης μοι εις υμας.

§ Colos. ch. i. 25. Την οικονομιαν του Θεου, την δοθειστην μοι εις υμας.

‖ Ephes. ch. v. 19. Ψαλμοις και υμνοις, και ωδαις πνευματικαις, αδοντες και ψαλλοντες εν τη καρδια υμων τω Κυριω.

¶ Colos. ch. iii. 16. Ψαλμοις και υμνοις και ωδαις πνευματικαις, εν χαριτι αδοντες εν τη καρδια υμων τω Κυριω.

** Ephes. ch. vi. 22. Ον επεμψα προς υμας εις αυτο τουτο, ινα γνωτε τα περι ημων, και παρακαλεση τας καρδιας υμων.

†† Colos. ch. iv. 8. Ον επεμψα προς υμας εις αυτο τουτο, ινα γνω τα περι υμων, και παρακαλεση τας καρδιας υμων.

sentences. Of all these varieties the examination of our two epistles will furnish plain examples: and I should rely upon this class of instances more than upon the last; because, although an impostor might transcribe into a forgery entire sentences and phrases, yet the dislocation of words, the partial recollection of phrases and sentences, the intermixture of new terms and new ideas with terms and ideas before used, which will appear in the examples that follow, and which are the natural properties of writings produced under the circumstances in which these epistles are represented to have been composed—would not, I think, have occurred to the invention of a forger; nor, if they had occurred, would they have been so easily executed. This studied variation was a refinement in forgery which I believe did not exist; or if we can suppose it to have been practised in the instances adduced below, why, it may be asked, was not the same art exercised upon those which we have collected in the preceding class?

Ephes. chap. i. 19; ch. ii. 5. "Towards us who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead (and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet: and gave him to be the head over all things, to the church, which is his body, the fulness of all things, that filleth all in all;) and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins (wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation, in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,) even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." *

Colos. ch. ii. 12, 13. "Through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead: and you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of the flesh, hath he quickened together with him."†

Out of the long quotation from the Ephesians, take away the parentheses, and you have left a sentence almost in terms the same as the short quotation from the Colossians. The resemblance is more visible in the original than in our translation; for what is rendered in one place, "the working," and in another the "operation," is the same Greek term ενεργεια: in one place it is, τους πιστευοντας κατα την ενεργειαν; in the other, δια της πιστεως της ενεργειας. Here, therefore, we have the same sentiment, and nearly in the same words; but, in the Ephesians, twice broken or interrupted by incidental thoughts, which St. Paul, as his manner was, enlarges upon by the way,* and then returns to the thread of his discourse. It is interrupted the first time by a view which breaks in upon his mind of the exaltation of Christ; and the second time by a description of heathen depravity. I have only to remark that Griesbach, in his very accurate edition, gives the parenthesis very nearly in the same manner in which they are here placed; and that without any respect to the comparison which we are proposing.

Ephes. ch. iv. 2—4. "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling"†

Colos. ch. iii. 12—15. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye; and, above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body."‡

In these two quotations the words ταπεινοφροσυνη, πραοτης, μακροθυμια, ανεχομενοι, αλληλων, occur in exactly the same order: αγαπη is also found in both, but in a different connexion; συνδεσμος της ειρηνης answers to συνδεσμος της τελειοτητος: εκληθητε εν ενι σωματι to εν σωμα κλθως και εκληθητε εν μια ελπιδι: yet is this similitude found in the midst of sentences otherwise very different.

Ephes. ch. iv. 16 "From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body."§

Colos. ch. ii. 19. "From which all the body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."‖

In these quotations are read εξ ου παν το σωμα συμβιβαζομενον in both places: επιχορηγουμενον answering to επιχορηγιας: δια των αφων to δια πασης αφης: αυξει την αυξησιν to ποιειται την αυξησιν: and yet the sentences are considerably diversified in other parts.

Ephes. ch. iv. 32. "And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you."¶

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* Ephes. ch. i. 19, 20; ii. 1, 5. Τους πιστευοντας κατα την ενεργειαν του κρατους της ισχυος αυτου, ην ενηργηκεν εν τω Χριστω, εγειρας αυτον εκ νεκρων· και εκαθισεν εν δεξια αυτου εν τοις επουρανιοις—και υμας οντας νεκρους τοις παραπτωμασι και ταις αμαρτιαις—και οντας ημας νεκρους τοις παραπτωμασι, συνεζωοποιησε τω Χριστω.

† Colos. ch. ii. 12, 13. Δια της πιστεως της ενεργειας του Θεου του εγειραντος αυτον εκ των νεκρων. Και υμας νεκρους οντας εν τοις παραπτωμασι και τη ακροβυστια της σαρκος υμων, συνεζωοποιησε συν αυτω.

* Vide Locke in loc.

† Ephes. ch. iv. 2—4. Μετα πασης ταπεινοφροσυνης και πραοτητος, μετα μακροθυμιας, ανεχομενοι αλληλων εν αγαπη· σπουδαζοντες τηρειν την ενοτητα του πνευματος εν τω συνδεσμω της ειρηνης. Εν σωμα και εν πνευμα, καθως και εκληθητε εν μια ελπιδι της κλησεως υμων.

‡ Colos. ch. iii. 12—15. Ενδυσασθε ουν, ως εκλεκτοι του Θεου αγιοι και ηγαπημενοι, σπλαγχνα οικτιρμων, χρηστοτητα, ταπεινοφροσυνην, πραοτητα, μακροθυμιαν· ανεχομενοι αλληλων, και χαριζομενοι εαυτοις, εαν τις προς τινα εχη μομφην, καθως και ο Χριστος εχαρισατο υμιν, ουτω και υμεις· επι πασι δε τουτοις την αγαπην, ητις εστι συνδεσμος της τελειοτητος· και η ειρηνη του Θεου βραβευετω εν ταις καρδιαις υμων, εις ην και εκληθητε εν ενι σωματι.

§ Ephes. ch. iv. 16. Εξ ου παν το σωμα συναρμολογουμενον και συμβιβαζομενον δια πασης αφης της επιχορηγιας κατ' ενεργειαν εν μετρω ενος εκαστου μερους την αυξησιν του σωματος ποιειται.

‖ Colos. ch. ii. 19. Εξ ου παν το σωμα δια των αφων και συνδεσμων επιχορηγουμενον και συμβιβαζομενον, αυξει την αυξησιν του Θεου.

¶ Eph. ch. iv. 32. Γινεσθε δε εις αλληλους χρηστοι ευσπλαγχνοι, χαριζομενοι εαυτοις, καθως και ο Θεος εν Χριστω εχαρισατο υμιν.

Colos. ch. iii. 13. "Forbearing one another and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."*

Here we have "forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake (εν Χριστω) hath forgiven you," in the first quotation, substantially repeated in the second. But in the second, the sentence is broken by the interposition of a new clause, "if any man have a quarrel against any;" and the latter part is a little varied; instead of "God in Christ," it is "Christ hath forgiven you."

Ephes. ch. iv. 22—24. "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness."†

Colos. ch. iii. 9, 10. "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him."‡

In these quotations, "putting off the old man, and putting on the new," appears in both. The idea is further explained by calling it a renewal; in the one, "renewed in the spirit of your mind;" in the other, "renewed in knowledge." In both, the new man is said to be formed according to the same model; in the one he is, "after God, created in righteousness and true holiness;" in the other, "he is renewed after the image of him that created him." In a word, it is the same person writing upon a kindred subject, with the terms and ideas which he had before employed still floating in his memory.§

Ephes. ch. v. 6—8. "*Because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience:* be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."‖

Colos. ch. iii. 6—8. "*For which thing's sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience;* in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these."¶

These verses afford a specimen of that *partial* resemblance which is only to be met with when no imitation is designed, when no studied recollection is employed, but when the mind, exercised upon the same subject, is left to the spontaneous return of such terms and phrases, as, having been used before, may happen to present themselves again. The sentiment of both passages is throughout alike: half of that sentiment, the denunciation of God's wrath, is expressed in identical words; the other half, viz. the admonition to quit their former conversation, in words entirely different.

Ephes. ch. v. 15, 16. "See then that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time."*

Colos. ch. iv. 5. "Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time."†

This is another example of that mixture, which we remarked of sameness and variety in the language of one writer. "Redeeming the time" (εξαγοραζομενοι τον καιρον,) is a literal repetition. "Walk not as fools, but as wise," (περιπατειτε μη ως ασοφοι, αλλ' ως σοφοι) answers exactly in sense, and nearly in terms, to "walk in wisdom," (εν σοφια περιπατειτε.) Περιπατειτε ακριβως is a very different phrase, but is intended to convey precisely the same idea as περιπατειτε προς τους εξω. Ακριβως is not well rendered "circumspectly." It means what in modern speech we should call "correctly," and when we advise a person to behave "correctly," our advice is always given with a reference "to the opinion of others," προς τους εξω. "Walk correctly, redeeming the time," *i. e.* suiting yourselves to the difficulty and ticklishness of the times in which we live, "because the days are evil."

Ephes. ch. vi. 19, 20. "And (praying) for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."‡

Colos. ch. iv. 3, 4. "Withal praying also for us that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds, that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak."§

In these quotations, the phrase, "as I ought to speak" (ως δει με λαλησαι,) the words "utterance" (λογος,) "a mystery" (μυστηριον,) "open" (ανοιξη and εν ανοιξει,) are the same. "To make known the mystery of the Gospel" (γνωρισαι το μυστηριον,) answers to "make it manifest" (ινα φανερωσω αυτο;) "for which I am an ambassador in bonds" (υπερ ου πρεσβευω εν αλυσει,) to "for which I am also in bonds" (δι ο και δεδεμαι.)

Ephes. ch. v. 22. "*Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord,* for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject

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* Colos. ch. iii. 13. Ανεχομενοι αλληλων, και χαριζομενοι εαυτοις· εαν τις προς τινα εχη μομφην, καθως και ο Χριστος εχαρισατο υμιν, ουτω και υμεις.

† Ephes. ch. iv. 22—24. Αποθεσθαι υμας κατα την προτεραν αναστροφην, τον παλαιον ανθρωπον τον φθειρομενον κατα τας επιθυμιας της απατης· ανανεουσθαι δε τω πνευματι του νοος υμων, και ενδυσασθαι τον καινον ανθρωπον, τον κατα Θεον κτισθεντα εν δικαιοσυνη και οσιοτητι της αληθειας.

‡ Colos. iii. 9, 10. Απεκδυσαμενοι τον παλαιον ανθρωπον συν ταις πραξεσιν αυτου· και ενδυσαμενοι τον νεον, τον ανακαινουμενον εις επιγνωσιν κατ' εικονα του κτισαντος αυτον.

§ In these comparisons, we often perceive the reason why the writer, though expressing the same idea, uses a different term; namely, because the term before used is employed in the sentence under a different form: thus, in the quotations under our eye, the new man is καινος ανθρωπος in the Ephesians, and τον νεον in the Colossians; but then it is because τον καινον is used in the next word, ανακαινουμενον.

‖ Ephes. ch. v. 6—8. Δια ταυτα γαρ ερχεται η οργη του Θεου επι τους υιους της απειθειας. Μη ουν γινεσθε συμμετοχοι αυτων. Ητε γαρ ποτε σκοτος, νυν δε φως εν Κυριω· ως τεκνα φωτος περιπατειτε.

¶ Colos. ch. iii. 6—8. Δι α ερχεται η οργη Θεου επι τους υιους της απειθειας· εν οις και υμεις περιεπατησατε ποτε, οτε εζητε εν αυτοις. Νυνι δε αποθεσθε και υμεις τα παντα.

* Ephes. ch. v. 15, 16. Βλεπετε ουν πως ακριβως περιπατειτε· μη ως ασοφοι, αλλ' ως σοφοι, εξαγοραζομενοι τον καιρον.

† Colos. ch. iv. 5. Εν σοφια περιπατειτε προς τους εξω, τον καιρον εξαγοραζομενοι.

‡ Ephes. ch. vi. 19, 20. Και υπερ εμου, ινα μοι, δοθειη λογος εν ανοιξει του στοματος μου εν παρρησια, γνωρισαι το μυστηριον του ευαγγελιου, υπερ ου πρεσβευω εν αλυσει, ινα εν αυτω παρρησιασωμαι, ως δει με λαλησαι.

§ Colos. ch. iv. 3, 4. Προσευχομενοι αμα και περι ημων, ινα ο Θεος ανοιξη ημιν θυραν του λογου, λαλησαι το μυστηριον του Χριστου δι ο και δεδεμαι, ινα φανερωσω αυτο ως δει με λαλησαι.

unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. *Husbands, love your wives*, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular, so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.* Honour thy father and thy mother (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth. *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath*, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. *Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: *knowing that your master also is in heaven*, neither is there respect of persons with him.*"

† Colos. ch. iii. 18. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh: not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.—But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven."

The passages marked by Italics in the quotation from the Ephesians, bear a strict resemblance, not only in signification but in terms, to the quotation from the Colossians. Both the words and the order of the words are in many clauses a duplicate of one another. In the Epistle to the Colossians, these passages are laid together; in that to the Ephesians, they are divided by intermediate matter, especially by a long digressive allusion to the mysterious union between Christ and his church; which possessing, as Mr. Locke hath well observed, the mind of the apostle, from being an incidental thought, grows up into the principal subject. The affinity between these two passages in signification, in terms, and in the order of the words, is closer than can be pointed out between any parts of any two epistles in the volume.

If the reader would see how the same subject is treated by a different hand, and how distinguishable it is from the production of the same pen, let him turn to the second and third chapters of the First Epistle of St. Peter. The duties of servants, of wives, and of husbands, are enlarged upon in that epistle, as they are in the Epistle to the Ephesians; but the subjects both occur in a different order, and the train of sentiment subjoined to each is totally unlike.

3. In two letters issuing from the same person, nearly at the same time, and upon the same general occasion, we may expect to trace the influence of association in the order in which the topics follow one another. Certain ideas universally or usually suggest others. Here the order is what we call natural, and from such an order nothing can be concluded. But when the order is arbitrary, yet alike, the concurrence indicates the effect of that principle, by which ideas, which have been once joined, commonly revisit the thoughts together. The epistles under consideration furnish the two following remarkable instances of this species of agreement.

Ephes. ch. iv. 24. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another."*

Colos. ch. iii. 9. "Lie not to one another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge."†

The vice of "lying," or a correction of that vice, does not seem to bear any nearer relation to the "putting on the new man," than a reformation in any other article of morals. Yet these two ideas, we see, stand in both epistles in immediate connexion.

Ephes. ch. v. 20, 21, 22. "Giving thanks al-

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* Ephes. ch. v. 22. Αι γυναικες, τοις ιδιοις ανδρασιν υποτασσεσθε, ως το Κυριω.

† Colos. ch. iii. 18. Αι γυναικες, υποτασσεσθε τοις ιδιοις ανδρασιν, ως ανηκεν εν Κυριω.

Ephes. Οι ανδρες, αγαπατε τας γυναικας εαυτων.

Colos. Οι ανδρες, αγαπατε τας γυναικας.

Ephes. Τα τεκνα, υπακουετε τοις γονευσιν υμων εν Κυριω· τουτο γαρ εστι δικαιον.

Colos. Τα τεκνα, υπακουετε τοις γονευσι κατα παντα· τουτο γαρ εστιν ευαρεστον τω Κυριω.

Ephes. Και οι πατερες, μη παροργιζετε τα τεκνα υμων.

Colos. Οι πατερες, μη ερεθιζετε * τα τεκνα υμων.

Ephes. Οι δουλοι, υπακουετε τοις κυριοις κατα σαρκα μετα φοβου και τρομου, εν απλοτητι της καρδιας υμων, ως τω Χριστω· μη κατ' υφθαλμοδουλειαν, ως ανθρωπαρεσκοι, αλλ' ως δουλοι του Χριστου, ποιουντες το θελημα του Θεου εκ ψυχης· μετ' ευνοιας δουλευοντες ως τω Κυριω, και ουκ ανθρωποις· ειδοτες οτι ο εαν τι εκαστος ποιηση αγαθον, τουτο κομιειται παρα του Κυριου, ειτε δουλος, ειτε ελευθερος.

Colos. Οι δουλοι, υπακουετε κατα παντα τοις κατα σαρκα κυριοις, μη εν οφθαλμοδουλειαις, ως ανθρωπαρεσκοι, αλλ' εν απλοτητι καρδιας, φοβουμενοι τον Θεον· και παν ο, τι εαν ποιητε, εκ ψυχης εργαζεσθε, ως τω Κυριω, και ουκ ανθρωποις· ειδοτες οτι απο Κυριου απολημψεσθε την ανταποδοσιν της κληρονομιας· τω γαρ Κυριω Χριστω δουλευετε.

* παροργιζετε, lectio non spernenda. GRIESBACH.

* Ephes. ch. iv. 24, 25. Και ενδυσασθαι τον καινον ανθρωπον, τον κατα Θεον κτισθεντα εν δικαιοσυνη και οσιοτητι της αληθειας· διο αποθεμενοι το ψευδος, λαλειτε αληθειαν εκαστος μετα του πλησιου αυτου· οτι εσμεν αλληλων μελη.

† Colos. ch. iii. 9. Μη ψευδεσθε εις αλληλους, απεκδυσαμενοι τον παλαιον ανθρωπον, συν ταις πραξεσιν αυτου, και ενδυσαμενοι τον νεον, τον ανακαινουμενον εις επιγνωσιν.

ways for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another, in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."*

Colos. ch. iii. 17. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit, in the Lord."†

In both these passages, submission follows giving of thanks, without any similitude in the ideas which should account for the transition.

It is not necessary to pursue the comparison between the two epistles farther. The argument which results from it stands thus: No two other epistles contain a circumstance which indicates that they were written at the same, or nearly at the same time. No two other epistles exhibit so many marks of correspondency and resemblance. If the original which we ascribe to these two epistles be the true one, that is, if they were both really written by St. Paul, and both sent to their respective destination by the same messenger, the similitude is, in all points, what should be expected to take place. If they were forgeries, then the mention of Tychicus in both epistles, and in a manner which shows that he either carried or accompanied both epistles, was inserted for the purpose of accounting for their similitude: or else the structure of the epistles was designedly adapted to the circumstance: or lastly, the conformity between the contents of the forgeries, and what is thus directly intimated concerning their date, was only a happy accident. Not one of these three suppositions will gain credit with a reader who peruses the epistles with attention, and who reviews the several examples we have pointed out, and the observations with which they were accompanied.

No. II.

There is such a thing as a peculiar word or phrase cleaving, as it were, to the memory of a writer or speaker, and presenting itself to his utterance at every turn. When we observe this, we call it a *cant* word, or a *cant* phrase. It is a natural effect of habit: and would appear more frequently than it does, had not the rules of good writing taught the ear to be offended with the iteration of the same sound, and oftentimes caused us to reject, on that account, the word which offered itself first to our recollection. With a writer who, like St. Paul, either knew not these rules, or disregarded them, such words will not be avoided. The truth is, an example of this kind runs through several of his epistles, and in the epistle before us *abounds;* and that is in the word *riches*, (πλουτος) used metaphorically as an argumentative of the idea to which it happens to be subjoined. Thus, "the *riches* of his glory," "his *riches* in glory," "*riches* of the glory of his inheritance," "*riches* of the glory of this mystery," Rom. ch. ix. 23. Ephes. ch. iii. 16. Ephes. ch. i. 18. Colos. ch. i. 27: "*riches* of his grace," twice in the Ephesians, ch. i. 7, and ch. ii. 7; "*riches* of the full assurance of understanding," Colos. ch. ii. 2; "*riches* of his goodness," Rom. ch. ii. 4; "*riches* of the wisdom of God," Rom. ch. xi. 33; "*riches* of Christ," Ephes. ch. iii. 8. In a like sense the adjective, Rom. ch. x. 12, "*rich* unto all that call upon him;" Ephes. ch. ii. 4, "*rich* in mercy;" 1 Tim. ch. vi. 18, *rich* in good works." Also the adverb, Colos. ch. iii. 16, "let the word of Christ dwell in you *richly*." This figurative use of the word, though so familiar to St. Paul, does not occur in any part of the New Testament, except once in the Epistle of St. James, ch. ii. 5. "Hath not God chosen the *poor* of this world, *rich* in faith? where it is manifestly suggested by the antithesis. I propose the frequent, yet seemingly unaffected use of this phrase, in the epistle before us, as one internal mark of its genuineness.

No. III.

There is another singularity in St. Paul's style, which, wherever it is found, may be deemed a badge of authenticity; because, if it were noticed, it would not, I think, be imitated, inasmuch as it almost always produces embarrassment and interruption in the reasoning. This singularity is a species of digression which may properly, I think, be denominated *going off at a word.* It is turning aside from the subject upon the occurrence of some particular word, forsaking the train of thought then in hand, and entering upon a parenthetic sentence in which that word is the prevailing term. I shall lay before the reader some examples of this, collected from the other epistles, and then propose two examples of it which are found in the Epistle to the Ephesians, 2 Cor. ch. ii. 14, at the word *savour:* "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the *savour* of his knowledge by us in every place, (for we are unto God a sweet *savour* of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the *savour* of death unto death, and to the other the *savour* of life unto life; and who is sufficient for these things?) For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God; in the sight of God, speak we in Christ." Again, 2 Cor. ch. iii. 1, at the word *epistle:* "Need we, as some others, *epistles* of commendation to you, or of commendation from you? (ye are our *epistle* written in our hearts, known and read of all men; forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the *epistle* of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart.") The position of the words in the original, shows more strongly than in the translation, that it was the occurrence of the word επιστολη which gave birth to the sentence that follows: 2 Cor. chap. iii. 1. Ει μη χρηζομεν, ως τινες, συστατικων επιστολων προς υμας, η εξ υμων συστατικων; η επιστολη ημων υμεις εστε, εγγεγραμμενη εν ταις καρδιαις ημων, γινωσκομενη και αναγινοσκομενη υπο παντων ανθρωπων· φανερουμενοι οτι εστε επιστολη Χριστου διακονηθεισα υφ' ημων, εγγεγραμμενη ου μελανι, αλλα πνευματι Θεου ζωντος· ουκ εν πλαξι λιθιναις, αλλ' εν πλαξι καρδιας σαρκιναις.

Again, 2 Cor. ch. iii. 12, &c. at the word *vail;* "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a *vail* over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same *vail*

* Ephes. ch. v. 20, 21, 22. Ευχαριστουντες παντοτε υπερ παντων, εν ονοματι του Κυριου ημων Ιησου Χριστου, τω Θεω και Πατρι, υποτασσομενοι αλληλοις εν φοβω Θεου. Αι γυναικες, τοις ιδιοις ανδρασιν υποτασσεσθε, ως τω Κυριω.

† Colos. ch. iii. 17. Και παν ο, τι αν ποιητε, εν λογω, η εν εργω, παντα εν ονοματι Κυριου Ιησου, ευχαριστουντες τω Θεω και πατρι δι αυτου. Αι γυναικες υποτασσεσθε τοις ιδιοις ανδρασιν, ως ανηκεν εν Κυριω.

untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which *vail* is done away in Christ: but even unto this day, when Moses is read, the *vail* is upon their heart: nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the *vail* shall be taken away (now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.) But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not."

Who sees not that this whole allegory of the *vail* arises entirely out of the occurrence of the word, in telling us that "Moses put a *vail* over his face," and that it drew the apostle away from the proper subject of his discourse, the dignity of the office in which he was engaged? which subject he fetches up again almost in the words with which he had left it: "therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." The sentence which he had before been going on with, and in which he had been interrupted by the *vail*, was, "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech."

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the reader will remark two instances in which the same habit of composition obtains; he will recognise the same pen. One he will find, chap. iv. 8—11, at the word *ascended*: "Wherefore he saith, When he *ascended* up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.—(Now that he *ascended*, what is it but that he also descended first unto the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that *ascended* up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles," &c.

The other appears, chap. v. 12—15, at the word *light*: "For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret: but all things that are reproved, are made manifest by the *light*; (for whatsoever doth make manifest, is *light*; wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee *light*:) see then that ye walk circumspectly."

No. IV.

Although it does not appear to have ever been disputed that the epistle before us was written by St. Paul, yet it is well known that a doubt has long been entertained concerning the persons to whom it was addressed. The question is founded partly in some ambiguity in the external evidence. Marcion, a heretic of the second century, as quoted by Tertullian, a father in the beginning of the third, calls it the Epistle to the Laodiceans. From what we know of Marcion, his judgment is little to be relied upon; nor is it perfectly clear that Marcion was rightly understood by Tertullian. If, however, Marcion be brought to prove that some copies in his time gave εν Λαοδικειᾳ in the superscription, his testimony, if it be truly interpreted, is not diminished by his heresy; for as Grotius observes, "*cur mea re mentiretur nihil erat causæ.*" The name εν Εφεσῳ, in the first verse, upon which word singly depends the proof that the epistle was written to the Ephesians, is not read in all the manuscripts now extant. I admit, however, that the external evidence preponderates with a manifest excess on the side of the received reading. The objection therefore principally arises from the contents of the epistle itself, which, in many respects, militate with the supposition that it was written to the church of Ephesus. According to the history, St. Paul had passed two whole years at Ephesus, Acts, chap. xix. 10. And in this point, viz. of St. Paul having preached for a considerable length of time at Ephesus, the history is confirmed by the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and by the two Epistles to Timothy: "I will tarry at *Ephesus* until Pentecost," 1 Cor. ch. xvi. ver. 8. "We would not have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in *Asia*," 2 Cor. ch. i. 8. "As I besought thee to abide still at *Ephesus*, when I went into Macedonia," 1 Tim. chap. i. 3. "And in how many things he ministered to me at *Ephesus* thou knowest well," 2 Tim. ch. i. 18. I adduce these testimonies, because, had it been a competition of credit between the history and the epistle, I should have thought myself bound to have preferred the epistle. Now, every epistle which St. Paul wrote to churches which he himself had founded, or which he had visited, abounds with references, and appeals to what had passed during the time that he was present amongst them; whereas there is not a text in the Epistle to the Ephesians, from which we can collect that he had ever been at Ephesus at all. The two Epistles to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Galatians, the Epistle to the Philippians, and the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, are of this class; and they are full of allusions to the apostle's history, his reception, and his conduct whilst amongst them; the total want of which, in the epistle before us, is very difficult to account for, if it was in truth written to the church of Ephesus, in which city he had resided for so long a time. This is the first and strongest objection. But farther, the Epistle to the Colossians was addressed to a church, in which St. Paul had never been. This we infer from the first verse of the second chapter: "For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh." There could be no propriety in thus joining the Colossians and Laodiceans with those "who had not seen his face in the flesh," if they did not also belong to the same description.* Now, his address to the Colossians, whom he had not visited, is precisely the same as his address to the Christians, to whom he wrote in the epistle which we are now considering: "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, *since we heard of your faith* in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints," Col. ch. i. 3. Thus, he speaks to the Ephesians, in the epistle before us, as follows: "Wherefore I also, *after I heard of your faith* in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you in my prayers," chap. i. 15. The terms of this address are observable. The words "having *heard* of your faith and love," are the very words, we see, which he uses towards strangers; and it is not probable that he should employ the same in accosting a church in which he had long exercised his ministry, and whose "faith and love"

* Dr. Lardner contends against the validity of this conclusion; but, I think, without success. LARDNER, vol. xiv. p. 473, edit. 1757.

he must have personally known. * The Epistle to the Romans was written before St. Paul had been at Rome; and his address to them runs in the same strain with that just now quoted; "I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for you all, that your faith is *spoken* of throughout the whole world:" Rom. ch. i. 8. Let us now see what was the form in which our apostle was accustomed to introduce his epistles, when he wrote to those with whom he was already acquainted. To the Corinthians it was this: "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus," 1 Cor. ch. i. 4. To the Philippians: "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you," Phil. ch. i. 3. To the Thessalonians: "We give thanks to God, always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering, without ceasing, your work of faith, and labour of love," 1 Thess. ch. i. 3. To Timothy: "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers, night and day," 2 Tim. ch. i. 3. In these quotations, it is usually his *remembrance*, and never his *hearing* of them, which he makes the subject of his thankfulness to God.

As great difficulties stand in the way supposing the epistle before us to have been written to the church of Ephesus, so I think it probable that it is actually the Epistle to the Laodiceans, referred to in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians. The text which contains that reference is this: "When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea," ch. iv. 16. The "epistle *from* Laodicea was an epistle sent by St. Paul to that church, and by them transmitted to Colosse. The two churches were mutually to communicate the epistles they had received. This is the way in which the direction is explained by the greater part of commentators, and is the most probable sense that can be given to it. It is also probable that the epistle alluded to was an epistle which had been received by the church of Laodicea *lately*. It appears then, with a considerable degree of evidence, that there existed an epistle of St. Paul's nearly of the same date with the Epistle to the Colossians, and an epistle directed to a church (for such the church of Laodicea was) in which St. Paul had never been. What has been observed concerning the epistle before us, shows that it answers perfectly to that character.

Nor does the mistake seem very difficult to account for. Whoever inspects the map of Asia Minor will see, that a person proceeding from Rome to Laodicea, would probably land at Ephesus, as the nearest frequented sea-port in that direction. Might not Tychicus then, in passing through Ephesus, communicate to the Christians of that place, the letter with which he was charged? And might not copies of that letter be multiplied and preserved at Ephesus? Might not some of the copies drop the words of designation εν τη Λαοδικειᾳ,* which it was of no consequence to an Ephesian to retain? Might not copies of the letter come out into the Christian church at large from Ephesus; and might not this give occasion to a belief that the letter was written to that church? And, lastly, might not this belief produce the error which we suppose to have crept into the inscription?

No. V.

As our epistle purports to have been written during St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, which lies beyond the period to which the Acts of the Apostles brings up his history; and as we have seen and acknowledged that the epistle contains no reference to any transaction at Ephesus, during the apostle's residence in that city, we cannot expect that it should supply many marks of agreement with the narrative. One coincidence however occurs, and a coincidence of that minute and less obvious kind, which, as hath been repeatedly observed, is of all others the most to be relied upon.

Chap. vi. 19, 20, we read, "praying for me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds." "*In bonds*," εν αλυσει, in a *chain*. In the twenty-eighth chapter of the Acts we are informed, that Paul, after his arrival at Rome, was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. Dr. Lardner has shown that this mode of custody was in use amongst the Romans, and that whenever it was adopted, the prisoner was bound to the soldier by a single chain: in reference to which St. Paul, in the twentieth verse of this chapter, tells the Jews whom he had assembled, "For this cause therefore, have I called for you to see you, and to speak with you, because that for the hope of Israel I am bound *with this chain*," την αλυσιν ταυτην περικειμαι. It is in exact conformity therefore with the truth of St. Paul's situation at the time, that he declares of himself in the epistle, πρεσβευω εν αλυσει. And the exactness is the more remarkable, as αλυσις (a chain) is no where used in the singular number to express any other kind of custody. When the prisoner's hands or feet were bound together, the word was δεσμοι (bonds,) as in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts, where Paul re-

* Mr. Locke endeavours to avoid this difficulty, by explaining "*their faith*, of which St. Paul had heard," to mean the steadfastness of their persuasion that they were called into the kingdom of God, without subjection to the Mosaic institution. But this interpretation seems to me extremely *hard;* for, in the manner in which faith is here joined with love, in the expression "your faith and love," it could not be meant to denote any particular tenet which distinguished one set of Christians from others; forasmuch as the expression describes the general virtues of the Christian profession. *Vide* LOCKE in loc

* And it is remarkable that there seem to have been some ancient copies without the words of designation, either the words *in Ephesus*, or the words *in Laodicea*. St. Basil, a writer of the fourth century, speaking of the present epistle, has this very singular passage: "And writing to the Ephesians, as truly united to him who is through knowledge, he (Paul) calleth them in a peculiar sense *such who are;* saying, *to the saints who are and* (or *even*) *the faithful in Christ Jesus;* for so those before us have transmitted it, and we have found it in ancient copies." Dr. Mill interprets (and, notwithstanding some objections that have been made to him, in my opinion rightly interprets) these words of Basil, as declaring that this father had seen certain copies of the epistle in which the words "in Ephesus" were wanting. And the passage, I think, must be considered as Basil's fanciful way of explaining what was really a corrupt and defective reading; for I do not believe it possible that the author of the epistle could have originally written αγιοις τοις ουσιν, without any name of place to follow it.

plies to Agrippa, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except *these bonds*," παρεκτος των δεσμων τουτων. When the prisoner was confined between two soldiers, as in the case of Peter, Acts, chap. xii. 6, two chains were employed; and it is said upon his miraculous deliverance, that the "chains" (αλυσεις, in the plural) "fell from his hands." Δεσμος, the noun, and δεισμαι the verb, being general terms, were applicable to this in common with any other species of personal coercion; but αλυσις, in the singular number, to none but this.

If it can be suspected that the writer of the present epistle, who in no other particular appears to have availed himself of the information concerning St. Paul, delivered in the Acts, had, in this verse, borrowed the word which he read in that book, and had adapted his expression to what he found there recorded of St. Paul's treatment at Rome; in short, that the coincidence here noted was effected by craft and design; I think it a strong reply to remark, that, in the parallel passage of the Epistle to the Colossians, the same allusion is not preserved; the words there are, "praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which *I am also in bonds*," δι ο και δεδεμαι. After what has been shown in a preceding number, there can be little doubt but that these two epistles were written by the same person. If the writer, therefore, sought for, and fraudulently inserted, the correspondency into one epistle, why did he not do it in the other? A real prisoner might use either general words which comprehended this amongst many other modes of custody; or might use appropriate words which specified this, and distinguished it from any other mode. It would be accidental which form of expression he fell upon. But an impostor, who had the art, in one place, to employ the appropriate term for the purpose of fraud, would have used it in both places.

CHAPTER VII.

The Epistle to the Philippians.

No. I.

When a transaction is referred to in such a manner, as that the reference is easily and immediately understood by those who are beforehand, or from other quarters, acquainted with the fact, but is obscure, or imperfect, or requires investigation, or a comparison of different parts, in order to be made clear to other readers, the transaction so referred to is probably real; because, had it been fictitious, the writer would have set forth his story more fully and plainly, not merely as conscious of the fiction, but as conscious that his readers could have no other knowledge of the subject of his allusion than from the information of which he put them in possession.

The account of Epaphroditus, in the Epistle to the Philippians, of his journey to Rome, and of the business which brought him thither, is the article to which I mean to apply this observation. There are three passages in the epistle which relate to this subject. The first, chap. i. 7, "Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, ye all are συγκοινωνοι μου της χαριτος, joint contributors to the gift which I have received."* Nothing more is said in this place. In the latter part of the second chapter, and at the distance of half the epistle from the last quotation, the subject appears again: "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and *he that ministered to my wants:* for he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick: for indeed he was sick nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that when ye see him again ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life *to supply your lack of service toward me*," chap. ii. 25—30. The matter is here dropped, and no farther mention made of it till it is taken up near the conclusion of the epistle as follows: "But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again, wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me. Notwithstanding, ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you," chap. iv. 10—18. To the Philippian reader, who knew that contributions were wont to be made in that church for the apostle's subsistence and relief, that the supply which they were accustomed to send to him had been delayed by the want of opportunity, that Epaphroditus had undertaken the charge of conveying their liberality to the hands of the apostle, that he had acquitted himself of this commission at the peril of his life, by hastening to Rome under the oppression of a grievous sickness; to a reader who knew all this beforehand, every line in the above quotations would be plain and clear. But how is it with a stranger? The knowledge of these several particulars is necessary to the perception and explanation of the references; yet that knowledge must be gathered from a comparison of passages lying at a great distance from one another. Texts must be interpreted by texts long subsequent to

* Pearce, I believe, was the first commentator, who gave this sense to the expression; and I believe also that his exposition is now generally assented to. He interprets in the same sense the phrase in the fifth verse, which our translation renders "your fellowship in the Gospel;" but which in the original is not κοινωνια του ευαγγελιου, or κοινωνια εν τω ευαγγελιω; but κοινωνια εις το ευαγγελιον.

them, which necessarily produces embarrassment and suspense. The passage quoted from the beginning of the epistle contains an acknowledgment, on the part of the apostle, of the liberality which the Philippians had exercised towards him; but the allusion is so general and indeterminate, that had nothing more been said in the sequel of the epistle, it would hardly have been applied to this occasion at all. In the second quotation, Epaphroditus is declared to have "ministered to the apostle's wants," and "to have supplied their lack of service towards him;" but *how*, that is, at whose expense, or from what fund he "ministered," or what was "the lack of service" which he supplied, are left very much unexplained, till we arrive at the third quotation, where we find that Epaphroditus "ministered to St. Paul's wants" only by conveying to his hands the contributions of the Philippians: "I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you:" and that "the lack of service which he supplied" was a delay or interruption of their accustomed bounty, occasioned by the want of opportunity: "I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity." The affair at length comes out clear; but it comes out by piecemeal. The clearness is the result of the reciprocal illustration of divided texts. Should any one choose therefore to insinuate, that this whole story of Epaphroditus, or his journey, his errand, his sickness, or even his existence, might, for what we know, have no other foundation than in the invention of the forger of the epistle; I answer, that a forger would have set forth his story connectedly, and also more fully and more perspicuously. If the epistle be authentic, and the transaction real, then every thing which is said concerning Epaphroditus, and his commission, would be clear to those into whose hands the epistle was expected to come. Considering the Philippians as his readers, a person might naturally write upon the subject, as the author of the epistle has written: but there is no supposition of forgery with which it will suit.

No. II.

The history of Epaphroditus supplies another observation: "Indeed he was sick, nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." In this passage, no intimation is given that Epaphroditus's recovery was miraculous. It is plainly, I think, spoken of as a natural event. This instance, together with one in the Second Epistle to Timothy ("Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick,") affords a proof that the power of performing cures, and, by parity of reason, of working other miracles, was a power which only visited the apostles occasionally, and did not at all depend upon their own will. Paul undoubtedly would have healed Epaphroditus if he could. Nor, if the power of working cures had awaited his disposal, would he have left his fellow-traveller at Miletum sick. This, I think, is a fair observation upon the instances adduced; but it is not the observation I am concerned to make. It is more for the purpose of my argument to remark, that forgery, upon such an occasion, would not have spared a miracle; much less would it have introduced St. Paul professing the utmost anxiety for the safety of his friend, yet acknowledging himself unable to help him; which he does, almost expressly, in the case of Trophimus, for he "left him sick;" and virtually in the passage before us, in which he felicitates himself upon the recovery of Epaphroditus, in terms which almost exclude the supposition of any supernatural means being employed to effect it. This is a reserve which nothing but truth would have imposed.

No. III.

Chap. iv. 15, 16. "Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity."

It will be necessary to state the Greek of this passage, because our translation does not, I think, give the sense of it accurately.

Οιδατε δε και υμεις, Φιλιππησιοι, οτι εν αρχη του ευαγγελιου, οτε εξηλθον απο Μακεδονιας, ουδεμια μοι εκκλησια εκοινωνησεν, εις λογον δοσεως και ληψεως, ει μη υμεις μονοι· οτι και εν Θεσσαλονικη και απαξ και δις εις την χρειαν μοι επεμψατε.

The reader will please to direct his attention to the corresponding particulars οτι and οτι και, which connect the words εν αρχη του ευαγγελιου, οτε εξηλθον απο Μακεδονιας, with the words εν Θεσσαλονικη, and denote, as I interpret the passage, two distinct donations, or rather donations at two distinct periods, one at Thessalonica, απαξ και δις, the other after his departure from Macedonia, οτε εξηλθον απο Μακεδονιας.* I would render the passage, so as to mark these different periods, thus: "Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I was departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. And that also in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." Now with this exposition of the passage compare 2 Cor. chap. xi, 8. 9: "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service. And when I was present with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied."

It appears from St. Paul's history, as related in the Acts of the Apostles, that upon leaving Macedonia he passed, after a very short stay at Athens, into Achaia. It appears, secondly, from the quotation out of the Epistle to the Corinthians, that in Achaia he accepted no pecuniary assistance from the converts of that country; but that he drew a supply for his wants from the Macedonian Christians. Agreeably whereunto it appears, in the third place, from the text which is the subject of the present number, that the brethren in Philippi, a city of Macedonia, had followed him with their munificence, οτε εξηλθον απο Μακεδονιας, when he was departed from Macedonia, that is, when he was *come into Achaia*.

The passage under consideration affords another circumstance of agreement deserving of our notice.

* Luke, ch. ii. 15. Και εγενετο, ως απηλθον απ' αυτων εις τον ουρανον οι αγγελοι, "as the angels were gone away," i. e. *after* their departure. οι ποιμενες ελεγον προς αλληλους. Matt. ch. xii. 43. Οταν δε το ακαθαρτον πνευμα εξελθη απο του ανθρωπου, "when the unclean spirit is gone," i. e. *after* his departure, διερχεται. John, ch. xiii. 30. Οτε εξηλθε (Ιουδας) "when he was gone," i. e. *after* his departure, λεγει Ιησους, Acts, ch. x. 7, ως δε απηλθεν ο αγγελος ο λαλων τω Κορνηλιω, "and when the angel which spake unto him was departed," i. e. *after* his departure, φωνησας δυο των οικετων, &c.

The gift alluded to in the Epistle to the Philippians is stated to have been made "in the beginning of the gospel." This phrase is most naturally explained to signify the first preaching of the Gospel in these parts, viz. on that side of the Ægean sea. The succours referred to in the Epistle to the Corinthians, as received from Macedonia, are stated to have been received by him upon his first visit to the peninsula of Greece. The dates therefore assigned to the donation in the two epistles agree; yet is the date in one ascertained very incidentally, namely, by the considerations which fix the date of the epistle itself; and in the other, by an expression ("the beginning of the Gospel") much too general to have been used if the text had been penned with any view to the correspondency we are remarking.

Farther, the phrase, "in the *beginning* of the Gospel," raises an idea in the reader's mind that the Gospel had been preached there more than once. The writer would hardly have called the visit to which he refers, the "beginning of the Gospel," if he had not also visited them in some other stage of it. The fact corresponds with this idea. If we consult the sixteenth and twentieth chapters of the Acts, we shall find, that St. Paul, before his imprisonment at Rome, during which this epistle purports to have been written, had been *twice* in Macedonia, and each time at Philippi.

No. IV.

That Timothy had been long with St. Paul at Philippi, is a fact which seems to be implied in this epistle twice. First, he joins in the salutation with which the epistle opens: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." Secondly, and more directly, the point is inferred from what is said concerning him, chap. ii. 19: "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state; for I have no man like minded, who will naturally care for your state; for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's; but *ye know the proof of him*, that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the Gospel." Had Timothy's presence with St. Paul at Philippi, when he preached the Gospel there, been expressly remarked in the Acts of the Apostles, this quotation might be thought to contain a contrived adaptation to the history; although, even in that case, the averment, or rather, the allusion in the epistle, is too oblique to afford much room for such suspicion. But the truth is, that in the history of St. Paul's transactions at Philippi, which occupies the greatest part of the sixteenth chapter of the Acts, no mention is made of Timothy at all. What appears concerning Timothy in the history, so far as relates to the present subject, is this: "When Paul came to Derbe and Lystra, behold a certain disciple was there named Timotheus, whom Paul would have to go forth with him." The narrative then proceeds with the account of St. Paul's progress through various provinces of the Lesser Asia, till it brings him down to Troas. At Troas he was warned in a vision to pass over into Macedonia. In obedience to which he crossed the Ægean sea to Samothracia, the next day to Neapolis, and from thence to Philippi. His preaching, miracles, and persecutions at Philippi, follow next; after which Paul and his company, when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, came to Thessalonica, and from Thessalonica to Berea. From Berea the brethren sent away Paul; "but Silas and *Timotheus* abode there still." The itinerary, of which the above is an abstract, is undoubtedly sufficient to support an inference that Timothy was along with St. Paul at Philippi. We find them setting out together upon this progress from Derbe, in Lycaonia; we find them together near the conclusion of it, at Berea in Macedonia. It is highly probable, therefore, that they came together to Philippi, through which their route between these two places lay. If this be thought probable, it is sufficient. For what I wish to be observed is, that in comparing, upon this subject, the epistle with the history, we do not find a recital in one place of what is related in another; but that we find, what is much more to be relied upon, an oblique allusion to an implied fact.

No. V.

Our epistle purports to have been written near the conclusion of St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, and after a residence in that city of considerable duration. These circumstances are made out by different intimations, and the intimations upon the subject preserve among themselves a just consistency, and a consistency certainly unmeditated. First, the apostle had already been a prisoner at Rome so long, as that the reputation of his bonds, and of his constancy under them, had contributed to advance the success of the Gospel: "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." Secondly, the account given of Epaphroditus imports, that St. Paul, when he wrote the epistle, had been in Rome a considerable time: "He longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick." Epaphroditus was with St. Paul at Rome. He had been sick. The Philippians had heard of his sickness, and he again had received an account how much they had been affected by the intelligence. The passing and repassing of these advices must necessarily have occupied a large portion of time, and must have all taken place during St. Paul's residence at Rome. Thirdly, after a residence at Rome thus proved to have been of considerable duration, he now regards the decision of his fate as nigh at hand. He contemplates either alternative, that of his deliverance, ch. ii. 23. "Him therefore (Timothy) I hope to send *presently*, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me; but I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly:" that of his condemnation, ver. 17. "Yea, and if I be offered* upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all." This consistency is material, if the consideration of it be confined to the epistle. It is farther material, as it agrees with respect to the duration of St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, with the account delivered in the Acts, which, having brought the apostle to Rome, closes the history by telling us "that he dwelt there *two whole years* in his own hired house."

* Αλλ' ει και σπενδομαι επι τη θυσια της πιστεως υμων, if my blood be poured out as a libation upon the sacrifice of your faith.

No. VI.

Chap. i. 23. "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."

With this compare 2 Cor. chap. v. 8: "We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

The sameness of sentiment in these two quotations is obvious. I rely however not so much upon that, as upon the similitude in the train of thought which in each epistle leads up to this sentiment, and upon the suitableness of that train of thought to the circumstances under which the epistles purport to have been written. This, I conceive, bespeaks the production of the same mind, and of a mind operating upon real circumstances. The sentiment is in both places preceded by the contemplation of imminent personal danger. To the Philippians he writes, in the twentieth verse of this chapter, "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, *so now also*, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." To the Corinthians, "Troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." This train of reflection is continued to the place from whence the words which we compare are taken. The two epistles, though written at different times, from different places, and to different churches, were both written under circumstances which would naturally recall to the author's mind the precarious condition of his life, and the perils which constantly awaited him. When the Epistle to the Philippians was written, he author was a prisoner at Rome, expecting his rial. When the Second Epistle to the Corinhians was written, he had lately escaped a danger n which he had given himself over for lost. The pistle opens with a recollection of this subject, nd the impression accompanied the writer's houghts throughout.

I know that nothing is easier than to transplant nto a forged epistle a sentiment or expression which is found in a true one; or, supposing both pistles to be forged by the same hand, to insert he same sentiment or expression in both. But he difficulty is to introduce it in just and close onnexion with a train of thought going before, nd with a train of thought apparently generated y the circumstances under which the epistle is written. In two epistles, purporting to be written on different occasions, and in different periods f the author's history, this propriety would not asily be managed.

No. VII.

Chap. i. 29, 30; ii. 1, 2. "For unto you is given, n the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, ut also to suffer for his sake; having the same onflict which *ye saw in me*, and now hear to be n me. If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of he Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfil ye my oy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, eing of one accord, of one mind."

With this compare Acts, xvi. 22: "And the multitude (at Philippi) rose up against them (Paul nd Silas;) and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them; and when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely; who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks."

The passage in the epistle is very remarkable. I know not an example in any writing of a juster pathos, or which more truly represents the workings of a warm and affectionate mind, than what is exhibited in the quotation before us.* The apostle reminds his Philippians of their being joined with himself in the endurance of persecution for the sake of Christ. He conjures them by the ties of their common profession and their common sufferings, "to fulfil his joy;" to complete, by the unity of their faith, and by their mutual love, that joy with which the instances he had received of their zeal and attachment had inspired his breast. Now if this was the real effusion of St. Paul's mind, of which it bears the strongest internal character, then we have in the words "the same conflict which ye saw in me," an authentic confirmation of so much of the apostle's history in the Acts, as relates to his transactions at Philippi; and, through that, of the intelligence and general fidelity of the historian.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Epistle to the Colossians.

No. I.

THERE is a circumstance of conformity between St. Paul's history and his letters, especially those which were written during his first imprisonment at Rome, and more especially the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, which being too close to be accounted for from accident, yet too indirect and latent to be imputed to design, cannot easily be resolved into any other original than truth. Which circumstance is this, that St. Paul in these epistles attributes his imprisonment not to his preaching of Christianity, but to his asserting the right of the Gentiles to be admitted into it without conforming themselves to the Jewish law. This was the doctrine to which he considered himself as a martyr. Thus, in the epistle before us, chap. i. 24: (I Paul) "who now rejoice in my sufferings for you"—"*for you*," *i. e.* for those whom he had never seen; for a few verses afterwards he adds, "I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you and for them in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh." His suffering therefore for *them* was, in their general capacity of Gentile Christians, agreeably to what he explicitly declares in his Epistle to the Ephesians, iv. 1: "For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, *for you Gentiles*." Again, in the epistle now under consideration, iv. 3: "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the *mystery* of Christ, for which I am also in bonds." What that "mystery of Christ" was, the Epistle to the Ephesians distinctly informs us: "Whereby

* The original is very spirited: Ει τις ουν παρακλησις εν Χριστω, ει τι παραμυθιον αγαπης, ει τις κοινωνια Πνευματος, ει τινα σπλαγχνα και οικτιρμοι, πληρωσατε μου την χαραν.

when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the *mystery of Christ*, which in other ages, was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, *that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel.*" This, therefore, was the *confession* for which he declares himself to be in bonds. Now let us inquire how the occasion of St. Paul's imprisonment is represented in the history. The apostle had not long returned to Jerusalem from his second visit into Greece, when an uproar was excited in that city by the clamour of certain Asiatic Jews, who, "having seen Paul in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him." The charge advanced against him was, that "he taught all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place; and farther brought Greeks also into the temple, and polluted that holy place." The former part of the charge seems to point at the doctrine, which he maintained, of the admission of the Gentiles, under the new dispensation, to an indiscriminate participation of God's favour with the Jews. But what follows makes the matter clear. When, by the interference of the chief captain, Paul had been rescued out of the hands of the populace, and was permitted to address the multitude who had followed him to the stairs of the castle, he delivered a brief account of his birth, of the early course of his life, of his miraculous conversion; and is proceeding in this narrative, until he comes to describe a vision which was presented to him, as he was praying in the temple; and which bid him depart out of Jerusalem, "for I will send thee far hence *unto the Gentiles*," Acts, xxii. 21. "They gave him audience," says the historian, "*unto this word*; and then lift up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth!" Nothing can show more strongly than this account does, what was the offence which drew down upon St. Paul the vengeance of his countrymen. His mission to the Gentiles, and his open avowal of that mission, was the intolerable part of the apostle's crime. But although the real motive of the prosecution appears to have been the apostle's conduct towards the Gentiles; yet, when his accusers came before a Roman magistrate, a charge was to be framed of a more legal form. The profanation of the temple was the article they chose to rely upon. This, therefore, became the immediate subject of Tertullus's oration before Felix, and of Paul's defence. But that he all along considered his ministry amongst the Gentiles as the actual source of the enmity that had been exercised against him, and in particular as the cause of the insurrection in which his person had been seized, is apparent from the conclusion of his discourse before Agrippa: "I have appeared unto thee," says he, describing what passed upon his journey to Damascus, "for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; but showed first unto them of Damascus, and of Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. *For these causes* the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me." The seizing, therefore, of St. Paul's person, from which he was never discharged till his final liberation at Rome; and of which, therefore, his imprisonment at Rome was the continuation and effect, was not in consequence of any general persecution set on foot against Christianity; nor did it befall him simply as professing or teaching Christ's religion, which James and the elders at Jerusalem did as well as he (and yet, for any thing that appears, remained at that time unmolested;) but it was distinctly and specifically brought upon him by his activity in preaching to the Gentiles, and by his boldly placing them upon a level with the once-favoured and still self-flattered posterity of Abraham. How well St. Paul's letters, purporting to be written during this imprisonment, agree with this account of its cause and origin, we have already seen.

No. II.

Chap. iv. 10. "Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: If he come unto you, receive him;) and Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision."

We find Aristarchus as a companion of our apostle in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, and the twenty-ninth verse: "And the whole city of Ephesus was filled with confusion; and having caught Gaius and *Aristarchus*, men of Macedonia, *Paul's companions in travel*, they rushed with one accord into the theatre." And we find him upon his journey with St. Paul to Rome, in the twenty-seventh chapter, and the second verse: "And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus's band: and, entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coast of Asia; one *Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.*" But might not the author of the epistle have consulted the history; and, observing that the historian had brought Aristarchus along with Paul to Rome, might he not for that reason, and without any other foundation, have put down his name amongst the salutations of an epistle purporting to be written by the apostle from that place? I allow so much of possibility to this objection, that I should not have proposed this in the number of coincidences clearly undesigned, had Aristarchus stood alone. The observation that strikes me in reading the passage is, that together with Aristarchus, whose journey to Rome we trace in the history, are joined Marcus and Justus, of whose coming to Rome the history says nothing. Aristarchus alone appears in the history, and Aristarchus alone would have appeared in the epistle, if the author had regulated himself by that conformity. Or if you take it the other way; if you suppose the history to have been made out of the epistle, why the journey of Aristarchus to Rome should be recorded, and not that of Marcus and Justus, if the ground-work of the narrative was the appearance of Aristarchus's name in the epistle, seems to be unaccountable.

"Marcus, *sister's son* to Barnabas." Does not this hint account for Barnabas's adherence to Mark in the contest that arose with our apostle concerning him? "And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do; and *Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark*; but Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work; and the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus." The history which records the dispute has not preserved the circumstance of Mark's relationship to Barnabas. It is no where noticed but in the text before us. As far, therefore, as it applies, the application is certainly undesigned.

"*Sister's* son to Barnabas." This woman, the mother of Mark, and the sister of Barnabas, was, as might be expected, a person of some eminence amongst the Christians of Jerusalem. It so happens that we hear of her in the history. "When Peter was delivered from prison, he came to the house of *Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark*, where many were gathered together praying," Acts, xii. 12. There is somewhat of coincidence in this; somewhat bespeaking real transactions amongst real persons.

No. III.

The following coincidence, though it bear the appearance of great nicety and refinement, ought not, perhaps, to be deemed imaginary. In the salutations with which this, like most of St. Paul's epistles, concludes, "we have Aristarchus and Marcus, and Jesus, which is called Justus, *who are of the circumcision*," iv. 10, 11. Then follow also, "Epaphras, Luke the beloved physician, and Demas." Now, as this description, "who are of the circumcision," is added after the first three names, it is inferred, not without great appearance of probability, that the rest, amongst whom is Luke, were not of the circumcision. Now, can we discover any expression in the Acts of the Apostles, which ascertains whether the author of the book was a Jew or not? If we can discover that he was not a Jew, we fix a circumstance in his character, which coincides with what is here, indirectly indeed, but not very uncertainly, intimated concerning Luke: and we so far confirm both the testimony of the primitive church, that the Acts of the Apostles was written by St. Luke, and the general reality of the persons and circumstances brought together in this epistle. The text in the Acts, which has been construed to show that the writer was not a Jew, is the nineteenth verse of the first chapter, where, in describing the field which had been purchased with the reward of Judas's iniquity, it is said, "That it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in *their* proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood." These words are by most commentators taken to be the words and observation of the historian, and not a part of St. Peter's speech, in the midst of which they are found. If this be admitted, then it is argued that the expression, "in *their* proper tongue," would not have been used by a Jew, but is suitable to the pen of a Gentile writing concerning Jews.* The reader will judge of the probability of this conclusion, and we urge the coincidence no farther than that probability extends. The coincidence, if it be one, is so remote from all possibility of design, that nothing need be added to satisfy the reader upon that part of the argument.

No. IV.

Chap. iv. 9. "With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, *who is one of you*."

Observe how it may be made out that Onesimus was a Colossian. Turn to the Epistle to Philemon, and you will find that Onesimus was the servant or slave of Philemon. The question therefore will be, to what city Philemon belonged. In the epistle addressed to him this is not declared. It appears only that he was of the same place, whatever that place was, with an eminent Christian named Archippus. "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved and fellow-labourer; and to our beloved Apphia, and *Archippus* our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house." Now turn back to the Epistle to the Colossians, and you will find Archippus saluted by name amongst the Christians of that church. "Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it," iv. 17. The necessary result is, that Onesimus also was of the same city, agreeably to what is said of him, "he is one of you." And this result is the effect either of truth which produces consistency without the writer's thought or care, or of a contexture of forgeries confirming and falling in with one another by a species of fortuity of which I know no example. The supposition of design, I think, is excluded, not only because the purpose to which the design must have been directed, viz. the verification of the passage in our epistle, in which it is said concerning Onesimus, "he is one of you," is a purpose, which would be lost upon ninety-nine readers out of a hundred; but because the means made use of are too circuitous to have been the subject of affectation and contrivance. Would a forger, who had this purpose in view, have left his readers to hunt it out, by going forward and backward from one epistle to another, in order to connect Onesimus with Philemon, Philemon with Archippus, and Archippus with Colosse? all which he must do before he arrives at his discovery, that it was truly said of Onesimus, "he is one of you."

CHAPTER IX.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

No. I.

It is known to every reader of Scripture, that the First Epistle to the Thessalonians speaks of the coming of Christ in terms which indicate an expectation of his speedy appearance: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that *we* which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the

* Vide Benson's Dissertation, vol. i. p. 318, of his works, ed. 1756.

archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then *we which are alive and remain*, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds—But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief," chap. iv. 15, 16, 17; ch. v. 4.

Whatever other construction these texts may *bear*, the idea they leave upon the mind of an ordinary reader, is that of the author of the epistle looking for the day of judgment to take place in his own time, or near to it. Now the use which I make of this circumstance, is to deduce from it a proof that the epistle itself was not the production of a subsequent age. Would an impostor have given this expectation to St. Paul, after experience had proved it to be erroneous? or would he have put into the apostle's mouth, or which is the same thing, into writings purporting to come from his hand, expressions, if not necessarily conveying, at least easily interpreted to convey, an opinion which was then known to be founded in mistake? I state this as an argument to show that the epistle was contemporary with St. Paul, which is little less than to show that it actually proceeded from his pen. For I question whether any ancient forgeries were executed in the life-time of the person whose name they bear; nor was the primitive situation of the church likely to give birth to such an attempt.

No. II.

Our epistle concludes with a direction that it should be publicly read in the church to which it was addressed: "I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." The existence of this clause in the body of the epistle is an evidence of its authenticity; because to produce a letter purporting to have been publicly read in the church of Thessalonica, when no such letter in truth had been read or heard of in that church, would be to produce an imposture destructive of itself. At least, it seems unlikely that the author of an imposture would voluntarily, and even officiously, afford a handle to so plain an objection. —Either the epistle was publicly read in the church of Thessalonica during St. Paul's life-time, or it was not. If it was, no publication could be more authentic, no species of notoriety more unquestionable, no method of preserving the integrity of the copy more secure. If it was not, the clause we produce would remain a standing condemnation of the forgery, and one would suppose, an invincible impediment to its success.

If we connect this article with the preceding, we shall perceive that they combine into one strong proof of the genuineness of the epistle. The preceding article carries up the date of the epistle to the time of St. Paul; the present article fixes the publication of it to the church of Thessalonica. Either therefore the church of Thessalonica was imposed upon by a false epistle, which in St. Paul's life-time they received and read publicly as his, carrying on a communication with him all the while, and the epistle referring to the continuance of that communication; or other Christian churches, in the same life-time of the apostle, received an epistle purporting to have been publicly read in the church of Thessalonica, which nevertheless had not been heard of in that church; or, lastly, the conclusion remains, that the epistle now in our hands is genuine.

No. III.

Between our epistle and the history the accordancy in many points is circumstantial and complete. The history relates, that after Paul and Silas had been beaten with many stripes at Philippi, shut up in the inner prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks, as soon as they were discharged from their confinement they departed from thence, and, when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, came to Thessalonica, where Paul opened and alleged that Jesus was the Christ, Acts, xvi. 23, &c. The epistle written in the name of Paul and Sylvanus (Silas,) and of Timotheus, who also appears to have been along with them at Philippi, (vide Phil. No. iv.) speaks to the church of Thessalonica thus: "Even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention," ii. 2.

The history relates, that after they had been some time at Thessalonica, "the Jews who believed not, set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason where Paul and Silas were, and sought to bring them out to the people," Acts, xvii. 5. The epistle declares, "when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even *as it came to pass, and ye know*," iii. 4.

The history brings Paul and Silas and Timothy together at Corinth, soon after the preaching of the Gospel at Thessalonica:—"And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, (to Corinth,) Paul was pressed in spirit," Acts, xviii. 5. The epistle is written in the name of these three persons, who consequently must have been together at the time, and speaks throughout of their ministry at Thessalonica as a recent transaction: "We, brethren, *being taken from you for a short time*, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face, with great desire," ii. 17.

The harmony is indubitable; but the points of history in which it consists, are so expressly set forth in the narrative, and so directly referred to in the epistle, that it becomes necessary for us to show that the facts in one writing were not copied from the other. Now, amidst some minuter discrepancies, which will be noticed below, there is one circumstance which mixes itself with all the allusions in the epistle, but does not appear in the history any where; and that is of a visit which St. Paul had intended to pay to the Thessalonians during the time of his residing at Corinth:—"Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again; but Satan hindered us," ii. 18. "Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might pertect that which is lacking in your faith. Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you," iii. 10, 11. Concerning a design which was not executed, although the person himself, who was conscious of his own purpose, should make mention in his letters, nothing is more probable than that his historian should be silent, if not ignorant. The author of the epistle could not, however, have learnt this circumstance from the history, for it is not there to be met with; nor, if the historian had drawn his materials from the epistle, is it likely that he would have passed over a circumstance, which is amongst the most

obvious and prominent of the facts to be collected from that source of information.

No. IV.

Chap. iii. 1—7. "Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good *to be left at Athens alone*, and sent Timotheus, our brother and minister of God, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith;—but now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith."

The history relates, that when Paul came out of Macedonia to Athens, Silas and Timothy staid behind at Berea: "The brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea; but Silas and Timotheus abode there still; and they that conducted Paul brought him to Athens," Acts, ch. xvii. 14, 15. The history farther relates, that after Paul had tarried some time at Athens, and had proceeded from thence to Corinth, whilst he was exercising his ministry in that city, Silas and Timothy came to him from Macedonia, Acts, ch. xviii. 5. But to reconcile the history with the clause in the epistle, which makes St. Paul say, "I thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and to send Timothy unto you," it is necessary to suppose that Timothy had come up with St. Paul at Athens; a circumstance which the history does not mention. I remark, therefore, that although the history does not expressly notice this arrival, yet it contains intimations which render it extremely probable that the fact took place. First, as soon as Paul had reached Athens, he sent a message back to Silas and Timothy "for to come to him with all speed," Acts, ch. xvii. 15. Secondly, his stay at Athens was on purpose that they might join him there: "Now whilst Paul *waited for them at Athens*, his spirit was stirred in him," Acts, ch. xvii. 16. Thirdly, his departure from Athens does not appear to have been in any sort hastened or abrupt. It is said, "After these things," viz. his disputation with the Jews, his conferences with the philosophers, his discourse at Areopagus, and the gaining of some converts, "he departed from Athens and came to Corinth." It is not hinted that he quitted Athens before the time that he had intended to leave it; it is not suggested that he was driven from thence, as he was from many cities, by tumults or persecutions, or because his life was no longer safe. Observe then the particulars which the history *does* notice—that Paul had ordered Timothy to follow him without delay, that he waited at Athens on purpose that Timothy might come up with him, that he staid there as long as his own choice led him to continue. Laying these circumstances which the history does disclose together, it is highly probable that Timothy came to the apostle at Athens, a fact which the epistle, we have seen, virtually asserts when it makes Paul send Timothy back from Athens to Thessalonica. The *sending back of Timothy into Macedonia* accounts also for his not coming to Corinth till after Paul had been fixed in that city for some considerable time. Paul had found out Aquila and Priscilla, abode with them and wrought, being of the same craft; and reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath day, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks, Acts, ch. xviii. 1—5. All this passed at Corinth before Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Acts, ch. xviii. 5. If this was the first time of their coming up with him after their separation at Berea, there is nothing to account for a delay so contrary to what appears from the history itself to have been St. Paul's plan and expectation. This is a conformity of a peculiar species. The epistle discloses a fact which is not preserved in the history; but which makes what is said in the history more significant, probable, and consistent. The history bears marks of an omission; the epistle by reference furnishes a circumstance which supplies that omission.

No. V.

Chap. ii. 14. "For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus; for ye also have suffered like things *of your own countrymen*, even as they have of the Jews."

To a reader of the Acts of the Apostles, it might seem, at first sight, that the persecutions which the preachers and converts of Christianity underwent, were suffered at the hands of their old adversaries the Jews. But if we attend carefully to the accounts there delivered, we shall observe, that, though the opposition made to the Gospel usually *originated* from the enmity of the Jews, yet in almost all places the Jews went about to accomplish their purpose, by stirring up the Gentile inhabitants against their converted countrymen. Out of Judea they had not power to do much mischief in any other way. This was the case at Thessalonica in particular: "The Jews which believed not, moved with envy, set all the city in an uproar," Acts, ch. xvii. ver. 5. It was the same a short time afterwards at Berea: "When the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people," Acts, ch. xvii. 13. And before this our apostle had met with a like species of persecution, in his progress through the Lesser Asia: in every city "the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil-affected against the brethren," Acts, ch. xiv. 2. The epistle therefore represents the case accurately as the history states it. It was the Jews always who set on foot the persecutions against the apostles and their followers. He speaks truly therefore of them, when he says in this epistle, "they both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have *persecuted us*—forbidding us to speak unto the Gentiles," ii. 15, 16. But out of Judea it was at the hands of the Gentiles, it was "of their own countrymen," that the injuries they underwent were immediately sustained: "Ye have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews."

No. VI.

The apparent discrepancies between our epistle and the history, though of magnitude sufficient to repel the imputation of confederacy or transcription (in which view they form a part of our argument,) are neither numerous, nor very difficult to reconcile. One of these may be observed in the ninth and tenth verses of the second chapter: "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail; for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among

you that believe." A person who reads this passage is naturally led by it to suppose, that the writer had dwelt at Thessalonica for some considerable time: yet of St. Paul's ministry in that city, the history gives no other account than the following: that he came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: that, as his manner was, he went in unto them, and *three Sabbath days* reasoned with them out of the scriptures: that some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas." The history then proceeds to tell us, that the Jews which believed not, set the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, where Paul and his companions lodged; that the consequence of this outrage was, that "the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea," Acts, ch. xvii. 1—10. From the mention of his preaching three Sabbath days in the Jewish synagogue, and from the want of any further specification of his ministry, it has usually been taken for granted that Paul did not continue at Thessalonica more than three weeks. This, however, is inferred without necessity. It appears to have been St. Paul's practice, in almost every place that he came to, upon his first arrival to repair to the synagogue. He thought himself bound to propose the Gospel to the Jews first, agreeably to what he declared at Antioch in Pisidia: "it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you," Acts, ch. xiii. 46. If the Jews rejected his ministry, he quitted the synagogue, and betook himself to a Gentile audience. At Corinth, upon his first coming thither, he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath; "but when the Jews opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he departed thence, expressly telling them, "from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles; and he remained in that city a year and six months," Acts, ch. xviii. 6—11. At Ephesus, in like manner, for the space of three months he went into the synagogue; but "when divers were hardened and believed not, but spake evil of that way, he departed from them and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus; and this continued by the space of two years," Acts, ch. xix. 9, 10. Upon inspecting the history, I see nothing in it which negatives the supposition, that St. Paul pursued the same plan at Thessalonica which he adopted in other places; and that though he resorted to the synagogue only three Sabbath days, yet he remained in the city, and in the exercise of his ministry amongst the Gentile citizens, much longer; and until the success of his preaching had provoked the Jews to excite the tumult and insurrection by which he was driven away.

Another seeming discrepancy is found in the ninth verse of the first chapter of the epistle; "For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how *ye turned to God from idols* to serve the living and true God." This text contains an assertion, that, by means of St. Paul's ministry at Thessalonica, many idolatrous Gentiles had been brought over to Christianity. Yet the history, in describing the effects of that ministry, only says, that "some of the Jews believed, and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few," ch. xvii. 4. The devout Greeks were those who already worshipped the one true God; and therefore could not be said, by embracing Christianity, "to be turned to God from idols."

This is the difficulty. The answer may be assisted by the following observations: The Alexandrian and Cambridge manuscripts read (for των σεβομενων Ἑλληνων πολυ πληθος) των σεβομενων και Ελληνων πολυ πληθος· in which reading they are also confirmed by the Vulgate Latin. And this reading is, in my opinion, strongly supported by the considerations, first, that οι σεβομενοι alone, *i. e.* without Ελληνες, is used in this sense in the same chapter—Paul being come to Athens, διελεγετο εν τη συναγωγη τοις Ιουδαιοις και τοις σεβομενοις: secondly, that σεβομενοι and Ἑλληνες no where come together. The expression is redundant. The οι σεβομενοι must be Ἑλληνες. Thirdly, that the και is much more likely to have been left out incuriâ manûs than to have been put in. Or after all, if we be not allowed to change the present reading, which is undoubtedly retained by a great plurality of copies, may not the passage in the history be considered as describing only the effects of St. Paul's discourses during the three Sabbath days in which he preached in the synagogue? and may it not be true, as we have remarked above, that his application to the Gentiles at large, and his success amongst them, was posterior to this?

CHAPTER X.

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians.

No. I.

It may seem odd to allege obscurity itself as an argument, or to draw a proof in favour of a writing from that which is naturally considered as the principal defect in its composition. The present epistle, however, furnishes a passage, hitherto unexplained, and probably inexplicable by us, the existence of which, under the darkness and difficulties that attend it, can be accounted for only by the supposition of the epistle being genuine; and upon that supposition is accounted for with great ease. The passage which I allude to is found in the second chapter: "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that WHEN I WAS YET WITH YOU I TOLD YOU THESE THINGS? *And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time;* for the mystery of iniquity doth already work, *only he that now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way;* and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." It were superfluous to prove, because it is in vain to deny, that this passage is involved in great obscurity, more especially the clauses distinguished by Italics. Now the observation I have to offer is founded upon this, that the passage expressly refers to a conversation which the author had previously holden with the Thessalonians upon the same subject: "Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you *I told you these things? And now ye know* what withholdeth." If such conversation actually passed; if, whilst "he was yet with them, he *told* them those things," then it follows that the epistle is

authentic. And of the reality of this conversation it appears to be a proof, that what is said in the epistle might be understood by those who had been present to such conversation, and yet be incapable of being explained by any other. No man writes unintelligibly on purpose. But it may easily happen, that a part of a letter which relates to a subject, upon which the parties had conversed together before, which refers to what had been before *said*, which is in truth a portion or continuation of a former discourse, may be utterly without meaning to a stranger who should pick up the letter upon the road, and yet be perfectly clear to the person to whom it is directed, and with whom the previous communication had passed. And if, in a letter which thus accidentally fell into my hands, I found a passage expressly referring to a former conversation, and difficult to be explained without knowing that conversation, I should consider this very difficulty as a proof that the conversation had actually passed, and consequently that the letter contained the real correspondence of real persons.

No. II.

Chap. iii. 8. "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labour night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have no power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow."

In a letter, purporting to have been written to another of the Macedonian churches, we find the following declaration:

"Now, ye Philippians, know also that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, *no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving but ye only.*"

The conformity between these two passages is strong and plain. They confine the transaction to the same period. The Epistle to the Philippians refers to what passed "in the beginning of the Gospel," that is to say, during the first preaching of the Gospel on that side of the Ægean sea. The Epistle to the Thessalonians speaks of the apostle's conduct in that city upon "his first entrance in unto them," which the history informs us was in the course of his first visit to the peninsula of Greece.

As St. Paul tells the Philippians, "that no church communicated with him, as concerning giving and receiving, but they only," he could not, consistently with the truth of this declaration, have received any thing from the neighbouring church of Thessalonica. What thus appears by general implication in an epistle to another church, when he writes to the Thessalonians themselves, is noticed expressly and particularly; "neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you."

The texts here cited further also exhibit a mark of conformity with what St. Paul is made to say of himself in the Acts of the Apostles. The apostle not only reminds the Thessalonians that he had not been chargeable to any of them, but he states likewise the motive which dictated this reserve: "not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us," ch. iii. 9. This conduct, and, what is much more precise, the end which he had in view by it, was the very same as that which the history attributes to St. Paul in a discourse, which it represents him to have addressed to the elders of the church of Ephesus: "Yea, ye yourselves also know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have *showed* you all things, how, *that so labouring ye ought to support the weak*," Acts, ch. xx. 34. The sentiment in the epistle and in the speech is in both parts of it so much alike, and yet the words which convey it show so little of imitation or even of resemblance, that the agreement cannot well be explained without supposing the speech and the letter to have really proceeded from the same person.

No. III.

Our reader remembers the passage in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, in which St. Paul spoke of the coming of Christ: "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep: for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief," 1 Thess. iv. 15—17, and ch. v. 4. It should seem that the Thessalonians, or some however amongst them, had from this passage conceived an opinion (and that not very unnaturally) that the coming of Christ was to take place instantly, ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν;* and that this persuasion had produced, as it well might, much agitation in the church. The apostle therefore now writes, amongst other purposes, to quiet this alarm, and to rectify the misconstruction that had been put upon his words:—"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, *nor by letter as from us*, as that the day of Christ is at hand." If the allusion which we contend for be admitted, namely, if it be admitted, that the passage in the second epistle relates to the passage in the first, it amounts to a considerable proof of the genuineness of both epistles. I have no conception, because I know no example, of such a device in a forgery, as first to frame an ambiguous passage in a letter, then to represent the persons to whom the letter is addressed as mistaking the meaning of the passage, and lastly, to write a second letter in order to correct this mistake.

I have said that this argument arises out of the text, *if* the allusion be admitted; for I am not ignorant that many expositors understand the passage in the second epistle, as referring to some forged letters, which had been produced in St. Paul's name, and in which the apostle had been made to say that the coming of Christ was then at hand. In defence, however, of the explanation which we propose, the reader is desired to observe,

1. The strong fact, that there exists a passage in the first epistle, to which that in the second is capable of being referred, *i. e.* which accounts for the error the writer is solicitous to remove. Had no other epistle than the second been extant, and

* Ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν, nempe hoc anno, says Grotius, ἐνέστηκεν his dicitur de re præsenti, ut Rom. viii. 38. 1 Cor. iii. 22. Gal. i. 4. Heb. ix. 9.

had it under these circumstances come to be considered, whether the text before us related to a forged epistle or to some misconstruction of a true one, many conjectures and many probabilities might have been admitted in the inquiry, which can have little weight when an epistle is produced, containing the very sort of passage we were seeking, that is, a passage liable to the misinterpretation which the apostle protests against.

2. That the clause which introduces the passage in the second epistle bears a particular affinity to what is found in the passage cited from the first epistle. The clause is this: "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by our gathering together unto him.*" Now, in the first epistle, the description of the coming of Christ is accompanied with the mention of this very circumstance of his saints being collected round him. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, *to meet the Lord* in the air," 1 Thess. chap. iv. 16, 17. This I suppose to be the "gathering together unto him" intended in the second epistle: and that the author, when he used these words, retained in his thoughts what he had written on the subject before.

3. The second epistle is written in the joint name of Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus, and it cautions the Thessalonians against being misled "by letter as from us" (ως δι ημων.) Do not these words, δι ημων, appropriate the reference to some writing which bore the name of these three teachers? Now this circumstance, which is a very close one, belongs to the epistle at present in our hands; for the epistle which we call the First Epistle to the Thessalonians contains these names in its superscription.

4. The words in the original, as far as they are material to be stated, are these: εις το μη ταχεως σαλευθηναι υμας απο του νοος, μητε θροεισθαι, μητε δια πνευματος, μητε δια λογου, μητε δι επιστολης, ως δι ημων, ως οτι ενεστηκεν η ημερα του Χριστου. Under the weight of the preceding observations, may not the words μητε δια λογου, μητε δι επιστολης, ως δι ημων, be construed to signify *quasi nos quid tale aut dixerimus aut scripserimus*,* intimating that their words had been mistaken, and that they had in truth said or written no such thing?

CHAPTER XI.

The First Epistle to Timothy.

FROM the third verse of the first chapter, "as I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia," it is evident that this epistle was written soon after St. Paul had gone to Macedonia from Ephesus. Dr. Benson fixes its date to the time of St. Paul's journey recorded in the beginning of the twentieth chapter of the Acts: "And after the uproar (excited by Demetrius at Ephesus) was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia." And in this opinion Dr. Benson is followed by Michaelis, as he was preceded by the greater part of the commentators who have considered the question. There is, however, one objection to the hypothesis, which these learned men appear to me to have overlooked; and it is no other than this, that the superscription of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians seems to prove, that at the time St. Paul is supposed by them to have written this epistle to Timothy, Timothy in truth was with St. Paul in Macedonia. Paul, as it is related in the Acts, left Ephesus "for to go into Macedonia." When he had got into Macedonia, he wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Concerning this point there exists little variety of opinion. It is plainly indicated by the contents of the epistle. It is also strongly implied that the epistle was written *soon* after the apostle's arrival in Macedonia; for he begins his letter by a train of reflection, referring to his persecutions in Asia as to recent transactions, as to dangers from which he had lately been delivered. But in the salutation with which the epistle opens, *Timothy was joined with St. Paul*, and consequently could not at that time be "left behind at Ephesus." And as to the only solution of the difficulty which can be thought of, viz. that Timothy, though he was left behind at Ephesus upon St. Paul's departure from Asia, yet might follow him so soon after, as to come up with the apostle in Macedonia, before he wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians; that supposition is inconsistent with the terms and tenor of the epistle throughout. For the writer speaks uniformly of his intention to return to Timothy at Ephesus, and not of his expecting Timothy to come to him in Macedonia: "These things write I unto thee, *hoping to come unto thee shortly*; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself," ch. iii. 14, 15. "*Till I come*, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine," ch. iv. 13.

Since, therefore, the leaving of Timothy behind at Ephesus, when Paul went into Macedonia, suits not with any journey into Macedonia, recorded in the Acts, I concur with Bishop Pearson, in placing the date of this epistle, and the journey referred to in it, at a period subsequent to St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, and consequently subsequent to the æra up to which the Acts of the Apostles brings his history. The only difficulty which attends our opinion is, that St. Paul must, according to us, have come to Ephesus after his liberation at Rome, contrary as it should seem, to what he foretold to the Ephesian elders, "that they should see his face no more." And it is to save the infallibility of this prediction, and for no other reason of weight, that an earlier date is assigned to this epistle. The prediction itself, however, when considered in connexion with the circumstances under which it was delivered, does not seem to demand so much anxiety. The words in question are found in the twenty-fifth verse of the twentieth chapter of the Acts: "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among

* Should a contrary interpretation be preferred, I do not think that it implies the conclusion that a false epistle had then been published in the apostle's name. It will completely satisfy the allusion in the text to allow, that some one or other at Thessalonica had pretended to have been told by St. Paul and his companions, or to have seen a letter from them, in which they had said, that the day of Christ was at hand. In like manner as, Acts, xv. 1, 24, it is recorded that some had pretended to have received instructions from the church at Jerusalem, which had been received, "to whom they gave no such commandment." And thus Dr. Benson interpreted the passage μητε θροεισθαι, μητε δια πνευματος, μητε δια λογου, μητε δι επιστολης, ως δι ημων, "nor be dismayed by any revelation, or discourse, or epistle, which any one shall pretend to have heard or received from us."

whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." In the twenty-second and twenty-third verses of the same chapter, *i. e.* two verses before, the apostle makes this declaration: "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." This "witnessing of the Holy Ghost" was undoubtedly prophetic and supernatural. But it went no farther than to foretell that bonds and afflictions awaited him. And I can very well conceive, that this might be all which was communicated to the apostle by extraordinary revelation, and that the rest was the conclusion of his own mind, the desponding inference which he drew from strong and repeated intimations of approaching danger. And the expression "I know," which St. Paul here uses, does not, perhaps, when applied to future events affecting himself, convey an assertion so positive and absolute as we may at first sight apprehend. In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, and the twenty-fifth verse, "I know," says he, "that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith." Notwithstanding this strong declaration, in the second chapter and twenty-third verse of this same epistle, and speaking also of the very same event, he is content to use a language of some doubt and uncertainty: "Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon *as I shall see how it will go with me.* But *I trust* in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." And a few verses preceding these, he not only seems to doubt of his safety, but almost to despair; to contemplate the possibility at least of his condemnation and martyrdom: "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all."

No. I.

But can we show that St. Paul visited Ephesus after his liberation at Rome? or rather, can we collect any hints from his other letters which make it probable that he did? If we can, then we have a *coincidence.* If we cannot, we have only an unauthorised supposition, to which the exigency of the case compels us to resort. Now, for this purpose, let us examine the Epistle to the Philippians and the Epistle to Philemon. These two epistles purport to be written whilst St. Paul was yet a prisoner at Rome. To the Philippians he writes as follows: "I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." To Philemon, who was a Colossian, he gives this direction: "But withal, prepare me also a lodging, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you." An inspection of the map will show us that Colosse was a city of the Lesser Asia, lying eastward, and at no great distance from Ephesus. Philippi was on the other, *i. e.* the western side of the Ægean sea. If the apostle executed his purpose; if, in pursuance of the intention expressed in his letter to Philemon, he came to Colosse soon after he was set at liberty at Rome, it is very improbable that he would omit to visit Ephesus, which lay so near to it, and where he had spent three years of his ministry. As he was also under a promise to the church of Philippi to see them "shortly;" if he passed from Colosse to Philippi, or from Philippi to Colosse, he could hardly avoid taking Ephesus in his way.

No. II.

Chap. v. 9. "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old."

This accords with the account delivered in the sixth chapter of the Acts. "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, *because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.*" It appears that, from the first formation of the Christian church, provision was made out of the public funds of the society for the indigent *widows* who belonged to it. The history, we have seen, distinctly records the existence of such an institution at Jerusalem, a few years after our Lord's ascension; and is led to the mention of it very incidentally, viz. by a dispute, of which it was the occasion, and which produced important consequences to the Christian community. The epistle, without being suspected of borrowing from the history, refers, briefly indeed, but decisively, to a similar establishment, subsisting some years afterwards at Ephesus. This agreement indicates that both writings were founded upon real circumstances.

But, in this article, the material thing to be noticed is the mode of expression: "Let not a widow be taken into the number."—No previous account or explanation is given, to which these words, "into the number," can refer; but the direction comes concisely and unpreparedly. "Let not a widow be taken into the number." Now this is the way in which a man writes, who is conscious that he is writing to persons already acquainted with the subject of his letter; and who, he knows, will readily apprehend and apply what he says by virtue of their being so acquainted: but it is not the way in which a man writes upon any other occasion; and least of all, in which a man would draw up a feigned letter, or introduce a supposititious fact.*

No. III.

Chapter iii. 2, 3. "A bishop then must be

* It is not altogether unconnected with our general purpose to remark, in the passage before us, the selection and reserve which St. Paul recommends to the governors of the church of Ephesus in the bestowing relief upon the poor, because it refutes a calumny which has been insinuated, that the liberality of the first Christians was an artifice to catch converts; or one of the temptations, however, by which the idle and mendicant were drawn into this society: "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse," v. 9, 10, 11. And in another place, "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." And to the same effect, or rather more to our present purpose, the apostle writes in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians: "Even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat," *i. e.* at the public expense. "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, *working not at all*, but are busy bodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." Could a designing or dissolute poor take advantage of bounty regulated with so much caution; or could the mind which dictated those sober and prudent directions be influenced in his recommendations of public charity by any other than the properest motives of beneficence?

blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house."

"*No striker:*" That is the article which I single out from the collection as evincing the antiquity at least, if not the genuineness, of the epistle; because it is an article which no man would have made the subject of caution who lived in an advanced æra of the church. It agreed with the infancy of the society, and with no other state of it. After the government of the church had acquired the dignified form which it soon and naturally assumed, this injunction could have no place. Would a person who lived under a hierarchy, such as the Christian hierarchy became when it had settled into a regular establishment, have thought it necessary to prescribe concerning the qualification of a bishop, "that he should be no striker?" And this injunction would be equally alien from the imagination of the writer, whether he wrote in his own character, or personated that of an apostle.

No. IV.

Chap. v. 23. "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."

Imagine an impostor sitting down to forge an epistle in the name of St. Paul. Is it credible that it should come into his head to give such a direction as this; so remote from every thing of doctrine or discipline, every thing of public concern to the religion or the church, or to any sect, order, or party in it, and from every purpose with which such an epistle could be written? It seems to me that nothing but reality, that is, the real valetudinary situation of a real person, could have suggested a thought of so domestic a nature.

But if the peculiarity of the advice be observable, the place in which it stands is more so. The context is this: "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." The direction to Timothy about his diet stands between two sentences, as wide from the subject as possible. The train of thought seems to be broken to let it in. Now when does this happen? It happens when a man writes as he remembers; when he puts down an article that occurs the moment it occurs, lest he should afterwards forget it. Of this the passage before us bears strongly the appearance. In actual letters, in the negligence of real correspondence, examples of this kind frequently take place; seldom, I believe, in any other production. For the moment a man regards what he writes as a *composition*, which the author of a forgery would, of all others, be the first to do, notions of order, in the arrangement and succession of his thoughts, present themselves to his judgment, and guide his pen.

No. V.

Chap. i. 15, 16. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in him to life everlasting."

What was the mercy which St. Paul here commemorates, and what was the crime of which he accuses himself, is apparent from the verses immediately preceding: "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; *who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious:* but I obtained *mercy*, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief," ch. i. 12, 13. The whole quotation plainly refers to St. Paul's original enmity to the Christian name, the interposition of Providence in his conversion, and his subsequent designation to the ministry of the Gospel; and by this reference affirms indeed the substance of the apostle's history delivered in the Acts. But what in the passage strikes my mind most powerfully, is the observation that is raised out of the fact. "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." It is a just and solemn reflection, springing from the circumstances of the author's conversion, or rather from the impression which that great event had left upon his memory. It will be said, perhaps, that an impostor acquainted with St. Paul's history, may have put such a sentiment into his mouth; or, what is the same thing, into a letter drawn up in his name. But where, we may ask, is such an impostor to be found? The piety, the truth, the benevolence of the thought, ought to protect it from this imputation. For, though we should allow that one of the great masters of the ancient tragedy could have given to his scene a sentiment as virtuous and as elevated as this is, and at the same time as appropriate, and as well suited to the particular situation of the person who delivers it; yet whoever is conversant in these inquiries will acknowledge, that to do this in a fictitious production is beyond the reach of the understandings which have been employed upon any *fabrications* that have come down to us under Christian names.

CHAPTER XII

The Second Epistle to Timothy.

No. I.

It was the uniform tradition of the primitive church, that St. Paul visited Rome twice, and twice there suffered imprisonment; and that he was put to death at Rome at the conclusion of his second imprisonment. This opinion concerning St. Paul's *two* journeys to Rome is confirmed by a great variety of hints and allusions in the epistle before us, compared with what fell from the apostle's pen in other letters purporting to have been written from Rome. That our present epistle was written whilst St. Paul was a *prisoner*, is distinctly intimated by the eighth verse of the first chapter: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner." And whilst he was a prisoner at *Rome*, by the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the same chapter: "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but when he was in Rome he sought me out very diligently and found

me." Since it appears from the former quotation that St. Paul wrote this epistle in confinement, it will hardly admit of doubt that the word *chain*, in the latter quotation, refers to that confinement; the chain by which he was *then* bound, the custody in which he was then kept. And if the word "chain" designate the author's confinement at the time of writing the epistle, the next words determine it to have been written from Rome: "He was not ashamed of my chain; but when he was in Rome he sought me out very diligently." Now that it was not written during the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, or during the same imprisonment in which the epistles to the Ephesians, the Colossians, the Philippians, and Philemon, were written, may be gathered, with considerable evidence, from a comparison of these several epistles with the present.

I. In the former epistles the author confidently looked forward to his liberation from confinement, and his speedy departure from Rome. He tells the Philippians (ch. ii. 24,) "I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." Philemon he bids to prepare for him a lodging: "for I trust," says he, "that through your prayers I shall be given unto you," ver. 22. In the epistle before us he holds a language extremely different: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day," ch. iv. 6—8.

II. When the former epistles, were written from Rome, Timothy was with St. Paul; and is joined with him in writing to the Colossians, the Philippians, and to Philemon. The present epistle implies that he was absent.

III. In the former epistles, Demas was with St. Paul at Rome: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you." In the epistle now before us: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is gone to Thessalonica."

IV. In the former epistles, Mark was with St. Paul, and joins in saluting the Colossians. In the present epistle, Timothy is ordered to bring him with him, "for he is profitable to me for the ministry," ch. iv. 11.

The case of Timothy and of Mark might be very well accounted for, by supposing the present epistle to have been written *before* the others; so that Timothy, who is here exhorted "to come shortly unto him," ch. iv. 9, might have arrived, and that Mark, "whom he was to bring with him," ch. iv. 11, might have also reached Rome in sufficient time to have been with St. Paul when the four epistles were written; but then such a supposition is inconsistent with what is said of Demas, by which the posteriority of this to the other epistles is strongly indicated; for in the other epistles Demas was with St. Paul, in the present he hath "forsaken him, and is gone to Thessalonica." The opposition also of sentiment, with respect to the event of the persecution, is hardly reconcilcable to the same imprisonment.

The two following considerations, which were first suggested upon this question by Ludovicus Capellus, are still more conclusive.

I. In the twentieth verse of the fourth chapter, St. Paul informs Timothy, "that Erastus abode at Corinth," Εραστος εμεινεν εν Κορινθῳ. The form of expression implies, that Erastus had staid behind at Corinth, when St. Paul left it. But this could not be meant of any journey from Corinth which St. Paul took prior to his first imprisonment at Rome; for when Paul departed from Corinth, as related in the twentieth chapter of the Acts, Timothy was with him: and this was the last time the apostle left Corinth before his coming to Rome; because he left it to proceed on his way to Jerusalem; soon after his arrival at which place he was taken into custody, and continued in that custody till he was carried to Cæsar's tribunal. There could be no need therefore to inform Timothy that "Erastus staid behind at Corinth" upon this occasion, because if the fact was so, it must have been known to Timothy, who was present, as well as to St. Paul.

2. In the same verse our epistle also states the following article: "Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." When St. Paul passed through Miletum on his way to Jerusalem, as related Acts xx, Trophimus was not left behind, but accompanied him to that city. He was indeed the occasion of the uproar at Jerusalem, in consequence of which St. Paul was apprehended; for "they had seen," says the historian, "before with him in the city, Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple." This was evidently the last time of Paul's being at Miletus before his first imprisonment; for, as hath been said, after his apprehension at Jerusalem, he remained in custody till he was sent to Rome.

In these two articles we have a journey referred to, which must have taken place subsequent to the conclusion of St. Luke's history, and of course after St. Paul's liberation from his first imprisonment. The epistle, therefore, which contains this reference, since it appears from other parts of it to have been written while St. Paul was a prisoner at Rome, proves that he had returned to that city again, and undergone there a second imprisonment.

I do not produce these particulars for the sake of the support which they lend to the testimony of the fathers concerning St. Paul's *second* imprisonment, but to remark their consistency and agreement with one another.—They are all resolvable into one supposition: and although the supposition itself be in some sort only negative, viz. that the epistle was not written during St. Paul's first residence at Rome, but in some future imprisonment in that city; yet is the consistency not less worthy of observation: for the epistle touches upon names and circumstances connected with the date and with the history of the first imprisonment, and mentioned in letters written during that imprisonment, and so touches upon them, as to leave what is said of one consistent with what is said of others, and consistent also with what is said of them in different epistles. Had one of these circumstances been so described as to have fixed the date of the epistle to the first imprisonment, it would have involved the rest in contradiction. And when the number and particularity of the articles which have been brought together under this head are considered; and when it is considered also, that the comparisons we have formed amongst them, were in all probability neither provided for, nor thought of, by the writer of the epistle, it will be deemed something very like the effect of truth, that no invincible repugnancy is perceived between them.

No. II.

In the Acts of the Apostles, in the sixteenth chapter, and at the first verse, we are told that Paul "came to Derbe and Lystra, and behold a certain disciple was there named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek." In the epistle before us, in the first chapter and at the fourth verse, St. Paul writes to Timothy thus: "Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, *and thy mother Eunice;* and I am persuaded that in thee also." Here we have a fair unforced example of coincidence. In the history, Timothy was the "son of a Jewess *that* believed:" in the epistle, St. Paul applauds "the *faith* which dwelt in his mother Eunice." In the history it is said of the mother, "that she was a Jewess, and believed:" of the father, "that he was a Greek." Now, when it is said of the mother *alone* "that she believed," the father being nevertheless mentioned in the same sentence, we are led to suppose of the father that he did not believe, *i. e.* either that he was dead, or that he remained unconverted. Agreeably hereunto, whilst praise is bestowed in the epistle upon one parent, and upon her sincerity in the faith, no notice is taken of the other. The mention of the grandmother is the addition of a circumstance not found in the history; but it is a circumstance which, as well as the names of the parties, might naturally be expected to be known to the apostle, though overlooked by his historian.

No. III.

Chap. iii. 15. "And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation."

This verse discloses a circumstance which agrees exactly with what is intimated in the quotation from the Acts, adduced in the last number. In that quotation it is recorded of Timothy's mother, "that she was a Jewess." This description is virtually, though, I am satisfied, undesignedly, recognized in the epistle, when Timothy is reminded in it, "that from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures." "The Holy Scriptures," undoubtedly meant the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The expression bears that sense in every place in which it occurs. Those of the New had not yet acquired the name; not to mention, that in Timothy's childhood, probably, none of them existed. In what manner then could Timothy have known "from a child," the Jewish Scriptures, had he not been born, on one side or on both, of Jewish parentage? Perhaps he was not less likely to be carefully instructed in them, for that his mother alone professed that religion.

No. IV.

Chap. ii. 22. "Flee also *youthful* lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

"*Flee also youthful lusts.*" The suitableness of this precept to the age of the person to whom it is addressed, is gathered from 1 Tim. chap. iv. 12: "Let no man despise thy youth." Nor do I deem the less of this coincidence, because the propriety resides in a single epithet; or because this one precept is joined with, and followed by a train of others, not more applicable to Timothy than to any ordinary convert. It is in these transient and cursory allusions that the argument is best founded. When a writer dwells and rests upon a point in which some coincidence is discerned, it may be doubted whether he himself had not fabricated the conformity, and was endeavouring to display and set it off. But when the reference is contained in a single word, unobserved perhaps by most readers, the writer passing on to other subjects, as unconscious that he had hit upon a correspondency, or unsolicitous whether it were remarked or not, we may be pretty well assured that no fraud was exercised, no imposition intended.

No. V.

Chap. iii. 10, 11. "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me *at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra;* what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me."

The Antioch here mentioned was not Antioch the capital of Syria, where Paul and Barnabas resided "a long time;" but Antioch in Pisidia, to which place Paul and Barnabas came in their first apostolic progress, and where Paul delivered a memorable discourse, which is preserved in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts. At this Antioch the history relates, that the "Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, *and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas*, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came into *Iconium*.... And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed; but the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil-affected against the brethren. Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided; and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles and also of the Jews, with their rulers, *to use them despitefully and to stone them*, they were aware of it, and fled unto *Lystra* and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about, and there they preached the Gospel.... And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe: and when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch." This account comprises the period to which the allusion in the epistle is to be referred. We have so far therefore a conformity between the history and the epistle, that St. Paul is asserted in the history to have suffered persecutions in the three cities, his persecutions at which are appealed to in the epistle; and not only so, but to have suffered these persecutions both in immediate suc-

cession, and in the order in which the cities are mentioned in the epistle. The conformity also extends to another circumstance. In the apostolic history, Lystra and Derbe are commonly mentioned together: in the quotation from the epistle Lystra is mentioned, and not Derbe. And the distinction will appear on this occasion to be accurate; for St. Paul is here enumerating his persecutions: and although he underwent grievous persecutions in each of the three cities through which he passed to Derbe, at Derbe itself he met with none: "The next day he departed," says the historian, "to Derbe; and when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra." The epistle, therefore, in the names of the cities, in the order in which they are enumerated, and in the place at which the enumeration stops, corresponds exactly with the history.

But a second question remains, namely, how these persecutions were "known" to Timothy, or why the apostle should recall these in particular to his remembrance, rather than many other persecutions with which his ministry had been attended. When some time, probably three years, afterwards, (*vide* Pearson's Annales Paulinas,) St. Paul made a second journey through the same country, "in order to go again and visit the brethren in every city where he had preached the word of the Lord," we read, Acts, chap. xvi. 1, that, "when he came to Derbe and Lystra, behold a certain disciple was there named Timotheus." One or other, therefore, of these cities, was the place of Timothy's abode. We read moreover that he was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium; so that he must have been well acquainted with these places. Also again, when Paul came to Derbe and Lystra, Timothy was already a disciple: "Behold, a certain disciple was there named Timotheus." He must therefore have been converted *before*. But since it is expressly stated in the epistle, that Timothy was converted by St. Paul himself, that he was "his own son in the faith;" it follows that he must have been converted by him upon his former journey into those parts; which was the very time when the apostle underwent the persecutions referred to in the epistle. Upon the whole, then, persecutions at the several cities named in the epistle are expressly recorded in the Acts: and Timothy's knowledge of this part of St. Paul's history, which knowledge is appealed to in the epistle, is fairly deduced from the place of his abode, and the time of his conversion. It may farther be observed, that it is probable from this account, that St. Paul was in the midst of those persecutions when Timothy became known to him. No wonder then that the apostle, though in a letter written long afterwards, should remind his favourite convert of those scenes of affliction and distress under which they first met.

Although this coincidence, as to the names of the cities, be more specific and direct than many which we have pointed out, yet I apprehend there is no just reason for thinking it to be artificial: for had the writer of the epistle sought a coincidence with the history upon this head, and searched the Acts of the Apostles for the purpose, I conceive he would have sent us at once to Philippi and Thessalonica, where Paul suffered persecution, and where, from what is stated, it may easily be gathered that Timothy accompanied him, rather than have appealed to persecutions as known to Timothy, in the account of which persecutions Timothy's presence is not mentioned; it not being till after one entire chapter, and in the history of a journey three years future to this, that Timothy's name occurs in the Acts of the Apostles for the first time.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Epistle to Titus.

No. I.

A VERY characteristic circumstance in this epistle, is the quotation from Epimenides, chap. i. 12: "One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies."

Κρητες αει ψευσται, κακα θηρια, γαστερες αργαι.

I call this quotation characteristic, because no writer in the New Testament, except St. Paul, appealed to heathen testimony; and because St. Paul repeatedly did so. In his celebrated speech at Athens, preserved in the seventeenth chapter of the Acts, he tells his audience, that "in God we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."

—του γαρ και γενος εσμεν.

The reader will perceive much similarity of manner in these two passages. The reference in the speech is to a heathen poet; it is the same in the epistle. In the speech, the apostle urges his hearers with the authority of a poet *of their own;* in the epistle he avails himself of the same advantage. Yet there is a variation, which shows that the hint of inserting a quotation in the epistle was not, as it may be expected, borrowed from seeing the like practice attributed to St. Paul in the history; and it is this, that in the epistle the author cited is called a *prophet*, "one of themselves, even a *prophet* of their own." Whatever might be the reason for calling Epimenides a prophet: whether the names of poet and prophet were occasionally convertible; whether Epimenides in particular had obtained that title, as Grotius seems to have proved; or whether the appellation was given to him, in this instance as having delivered a description of the Cretan character, which the future state of morals among them verified: whatever was the reason (and any of these reasons will account for the variation, supposing St. Paul to have been the author,) one point is plain, namely, if the epistle had been forged, and the author had inserted a quotation in it merely from having seen an example of the same kind in a speech ascribed to St. Paul, he would so far have imitated his original, as to have introduced his quotation in the same manner; that is, he would have given to Epimenides the title which he saw there given to Aratus. The other side of the alternative is, that the history took the hint from the epistle. But that the author of the Acts of the Apostles had not the Epistle to Titus before him, at least that he did not use it as one of the documents or materials of his narrative, is rendered nearly certain by the obser-

vation, that the name of Titus does not once occur in this book.

It is well known, and was remarked by St. Jerome, that the apophthegm in the fifteenth chapter of the Corinthians, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," is an iambic of Menander's:

Φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρηστ' ὁμιλίαι κακαί.

Here we have another unaffected instance of the same turn and habit of composition.—Probably there are some hitherto unnoticed; and more, which the loss of the original authors renders impossible to be now ascertained.

No. II.

There exists a visible affinity between the Epistle to Titus and the First Epistle to Timothy. Both letters were addressed to persons left by the writer to preside in their respective churches during his absence. Both letters are principally occupied in describing the qualifications to be sought for, in those whom they should appoint to offices in the church; and the ingredients of this description are in both letters nearly the same. Timothy and Titus are likewise cautioned against the same prevailing corruptions, and in particular, against the same misdirection of their cares and studies. This affinity obtains, not only in the subject of the letters, which from the similarity of situation in the persons to whom they were addressed, might be expected to be somewhat alike, but extends, in a great variety of instances, to the phrases and expressions. The writer accosts his two friends with the same salutation, and passes on to the business of his letter by the same transition.

"Unto Timothy, *my own son in the faith:* Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. *As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia,*" &c. 1 Tim. chap. i. 2, 3.

"To Titus, *mine own son after the common faith*: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. *For this cause left I thee in Crete,*" Tit. chap. i. 4, 5.

If Timothy was not to "*give heed to fables* and endless *genealogies*, which minister *questions*," 1 Tim. chap. i. 4, Titus also was to "avoid foolish *questions*, and *genealogies*, and contentions," chap. iii. 9; and was to "rebuke them sharply, *not giving heed to Jewish fables*," chap. i. 14. If Timothy was to be a pattern, (τυπος,) 1 Tim. ch. iv. 12, so was Titus, chap. ii. 7. If Timothy was to "let no man despise his youth," 1 Tim. ch. iv. 12, Titus also was to let "no man despise him," chap. ii. 15. This verbal consent is also observable in some very peculiar expressions, which have no relation to the particular character of Timothy or Titus.

The phrase, "it is a faithful saying" (πιστος ο λογος) made use of to preface some sentence upon which the writer lays a more than ordinary stress, occurs three times in the First Epistle to Timothy, once in the Second, and once in the epistle before us, and in no other part of St. Paul's writings; and it is remarkable that these three epistles were probably all written towards the conclusion of his life; and that they are the only epistles which were written after his first imprisonment at Rome

The same observation belongs to another singularity of expression, and that is in the epithet "*sound*" (υγιαινων,) as applied to words or doctrine. It is thus used, twice in the First Epistle to Timothy, twice in the Second, and three times in the Epistle to Titus, besides two cognate expressions, υγιαινοντας τη πιστει and λογου υγιη; and it is found, in the same sense, in no other part of the New Testament.

The phrase, "God our Saviour," stands in nearly the same predicament. It is repeated three times in the First Epistle to Timothy, as many in the Epistle to Titus, and in no other book of the New Testament occurs at all, except once in the Epistle of Jude.

Similar terms, intermixed indeed with others, are employed in the two epistles, in enumerating the qualifications required in those who should be advanced to stations of authority in the church.

"A bishop must be blameless, *the husband of one wife*, vigilant, *sober*, of good behaviour, *given to hospitality*, apt to teach, *not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre;* but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity," * 1 Tim. chap. iii. 2—4.

"If any be *blameless, the husband of one wife*, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, *not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality*, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate," † Titus, chap. i. 6—8.

The most natural account which can be given of these resemblances, is to suppose that the two epistles were written nearly at the same time, and whilst the same ideas and phrases dwelt in the writer's mind. Let us inquire, therefore, whether the notes of time, extant in the two epistles, in any manner favour this supposition.

We have seen that it was necessary to refer the First Epistle to Timothy to a date subsequent to St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, because there was no journey into Macedonia prior to that event, which accorded with the circumstance of leaving "Timothy behind at Ephesus." The journey of St. Paul from Crete, alluded to in the epistle before us, and in which Titus "was left in Crete to set in order the things that were wanting," must in like manner, be carried to the period which intervened between his first and second imprisonment. For the history, which reaches, we know, to the time of St. Paul's first imprisonment, contains no account of his going to Crete, except upon his voyage as a prisoner to Rome; and that this could not be the occasion referred to in our epistle is evident from hence, that when St. Paul wrote this epistle he appears to have been at liberty: whereas after that voyage, he con-

* "Δει ουν τον επισκοπον ανεπιλημπτον ειναι, μιας γυναικος ανδρα, νηφαλιον, σωφρονα, κοσμιον, φιλοξενον, διδακτικον, μη παροινον, μη πληκτην, μη αισχροκερδη· αλλ' επιεικη, αμαχον, αφιλαργυρον· του ιδιου οικου καλως προϊσταμενον, τεκνα εχοντα εν υποταγη μετα πασης σεμνοτητος."

† "Ει τις εστιν ανεγκλητος, μιας γυναικος ανηρ, τεκνα εχων πιστα, μη εν κατηγορια ασωτιας, η ανυποτακτα. Δει γαρ τον επισκοπον ανεγκλητον ειναι, ως Θεου οικονομον, μη αυθαδη, μη οργιλον, μη παροινον, μη πληκτην, μη αισχροκερδη· αλλα φιλοξενον, φιλαγαθον, σωφρονα, δικαιον, οσιον, εγκρατη."

tinued for two years at least in confinement. Again, it is agreed that St. Paul wrote his First Epistle to Timothy from Macedonia: "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went (or came) into Macedonia." And that he was in these parts, *i. e.* in this peninsula, when he wrote the Epistle to Titus, is rendered probable by his directing Titus to come to him to Nicopolis: "When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent (make haste) to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter." The most noted city of that name was in Epirus, near to Actium. And I think the form of speaking, as well as the nature of the case, renders it probable that the writer was at Nicopolis, or in the neighbourhood thereof, when he dictated this direction to Titus.

Upon the whole, if we may be allowed to suppose that St. Paul, after his liberation at Rome, sailed into Asia, taking Crete in his way; that from Asia and from Ephesus, the capital of that country, he proceeded into Macedonia, and crossing the peninsula in his progress, came into the neighbourhood of Nicopolis; we have a route which falls in with every thing. It executes the intention expressed by the Apostle of visiting Colosse and Philippi as soon as he should be set at liberty at Rome. It allows him to leave "Titus at Crete," and "Timothy at Ephesus, as he went into Macedonia:" and to write to both not long after from the peninsula of Greece, and probably the neighbourhood of Nicopolis: thus bringing together the dates of these two letters, and thereby accounting for that affinity between them, both in subject and language, which our remarks have pointed out. I confess that the journey which we have thus traced out for St. Paul, is, in a great measure, hypothetic: but it should be observed, that it is a species of consistency, which seldom belongs to falsehood, to admit of an hypothesis, which includes a great number of independent circumstances without contradiction.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Epistle to Philemon.

No. I.

The singular correspondency between this epistle and that to the Colossians has been remarked already. An assertion in the Epistle to the Colossians, viz. that "Onesimus was one of them," is verified, not by any mention of Colosse, any the most distant intimation concerning the place of Philemon's abode, but singly by stating Onesimus to be Philemon's servant, and by joining in the salutation Philemon with Archippus; for this Archippus, when we go back to the Epistle to the Colossians, appears to have been an inhabitant of that city, and, as it should seem, to have held an office of authority in that church. The case stands thus. Take the Epistle to the Colossians alone, and no circumstance is discoverable which makes out the assertion, that Onesimus was "one of them." Take the Epistle to Philemon alone, and nothing at all appears concerning the place to which Philemon or his servant Onesimus belonged. For any thing that is said in the epistle, Philemon might have been a Thessalonian, a Philippian, or an Ephesian, as well as a Colossian. Put the two epistles together, and the matter is clear. The reader perceives a *junction* of circumstances, which ascertains the conclusion at once. Now, all that is necessary to be added in this place is, that this correspondency evinces the genuineness of one epistle, as well as of the other. It is like comparing the two parts of a cloven tally. Coincidence proves the authenticity of both.

No. II.

And this coincidence is perfect; not only in the main article of showing, by implication, Onesimus to be a Colossian, but in many dependent circumstances.

1. "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom *I have sent* again," ver. 10—12. It appears from the Epistle to the Colossians, that, in truth, Onesimus was sent at that time to Colosse: "All my state shall Tychicus declare, whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, *with Onesimus*, a faithful and beloved brother," Colos. chap. iv. 7—9.

2. "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, *whom I have begotten in my bonds*," ver. 10. It appears from the preceding quotation, that Onesimus was with St. Paul when he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians; and that he wrote that epistle *in imprisonment* is evident from his declaration in the fourth chapter and third verse: "Praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also *in bonds*.

3. St. Paul bids Philemon prepare for him a lodging: "For I trust," says he, "that through your prayers I shall be given unto you." This agrees with the expectation of speedy deliverance, which he expressed in another epistle written during the same imprisonment: "Him" (Timothy) "I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me; *but I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly*," Phil. chap. ii. 23, 24.

4. As the letter to Philemon, and that to the Colossians, were written at the same time, and sent by the same messenger, the one to a particular inhabitant, the other to the church of Colosse, it may be expected that the same or nearly the same persons would be about St. Paul, and join with him, as was the practice, in the salutations of the epistle. Accordingly we find the names of Aristarchus, Marcus, Epaphras, Luke, and Demas, in both epistles. Timothy, who is joined with St. Paul in the superscription of the Epistle to the Colossians, is joined with him in this. Tychicus did not salute Philemon, because he accompanied the epistle to Colosse, and would undoubtedly there see him. Yet the reader of the Epistle to Philemon will remark one considerable diversity in the catalogue of saluting friends, and which shows that the catalogue was not copied from that to the Colossians. In the Epistle to the Colossians, Aristarchus is called by St. Paul his fellow-prisoner, Colos. chap. iv. 10; in the Epistle to Philemon, Aristarchus is mentioned without any addition, and the title of fellow-prisoner is given to Epaphras. *

* Dr. Benson observes, and perhaps truly, that the appellation of fellow-prisoner, as applied by St. Paul to Epaphras, did not imply that they were imprisoned together *at the time*; any more than your calling a per-

And let it also be observed, that notwithstanding the close and circumstantial agreement between the two epistles, this is not the case of an opening left in a genuine writing, which an impostor is induced to fill up; nor of a reference to some writing not extant, which sets a sophist at work to supply the loss, in like manner as, because St. Paul was supposed, Colos. chap. iv. 16, to allude to an epistle written by him to the Laodiceans, some person has from thence taken the hint of uttering a forgery under that title. The present, I say, is not that case; for Philemon's name is not mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians; Onesimus' servile condition is no where hinted at, any more than his crime, his flight, or the place or time of his conversion. The story, therefore, of the epistle, if it be a fiction, is a fiction to which the author could not have been guided by any thing he had read in St. Paul's genuine writings.

No. III.

Ver. 4, 5. "I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints."

"*Hearing of thy love and faith.*" This is the form of speech which St. Paul was wont to use towards those churches which he had not seen, or then visited: see Rom. chap. i. 8; Ephes. chap. i. 15; Col. chap. i. 3, 4. Toward those churches and persons, with whom he was previously acquainted, he employed a different phrase; as, "I thank my God always on your behalf," 1 Cor. chap. i. 4; 2 Thess. chap. i. 3; or, "upon every *remembrance* of you," Phil. chap. i. 3; 1 Thess. chap. i. 2, 3; 2 Tim. chap. i. 3; and never speaks of *hearing of them*. Yet I think it must be concluded, from the nineteenth verse of this epistle, that Philemon had been converted by St. Paul himself: "Albeit, I do not say to thee how *thou owest unto me* even thine own self besides." Here then is a peculiarity. Let us inquire whether the epistle supplies any circumstance which will account for it. We have seen that it may be made out, not from the epistle itself, but from a comparison of the epistle with that to the Colossians, that Philemon was an inhabitant of Colosse: and it farther appears, from the Epistle to the Colossians, that St. Paul had never been in that city: "I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh," Col. ch. ii. 1. Although, therefore, St. Paul had formerly met with Philemon at some other place, and had been the immediate instrument of his conversion, yet Philemon's faith and conduct afterwards, inasmuch as he lived in a city which St. Paul had never visited, could only be known to him by fame and reputation.

No. IV.

The tenderness and delicacy of this epistle have long been admired: "Though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ; I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds." There is something certainly very melting and persuasive in this, and every part of the epistle. Yet, in my opinion, the character of St. Paul prevails in it throughout. The warm, affectionate, authoritative teacher is interceding with an absent friend for a beloved convert. He urges his suit with an earnestness, befitting perhaps not so much the occasion, as the ardour and sensibility of his own mind. Here also, as every where, he shows himself conscious of the weight and dignity of his mission; nor does he suffer Philemon for a moment to forget it: "I *might* be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient." He is careful also to recall, though obliquely, to Philemon's memory, the sacred obligation under which he had laid him, by bringing to him the knowledge of Jesus Christ: "I do not say to thee how thou owest to me even thine own self besides." Without laying aside, therefore, the apostolic character, our author softens the imperative style of his address, by mixing with it every sentiment and consideration that could move the heart of his correspondent: Aged and in prison, he is content to supplicate and entreat. Onesimus was rendered dear to him by his conversion and his services: the child of his affliction, and "ministering unto him in the bonds of the Gospel." This ought to recommend him, whatever had been his fault, to Philemon's forgiveness: "Receive him as myself, as my own bowels." Every thing, however, should be voluntary. St. Paul was determined that Philemon's compliance should flow from his own bounty: "Without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly;" trusting nevertheless to his gratitude and attachment for the performance of all that he requested, and for more: "Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say."

St. Paul's discourse at Miletus; his speech before Agrippa; his Epistle to the Romans, as hath been remarked, (No. VIII.) that to the Galatians, chap. iv. 11—20; to the Philippians, chap. i. 29—chap. ii. 2; the Second to the Corinthians, chap. vi. 1—13; and indeed some part or other of almost every epistle, exhibit examples of a similar application to the feelings and affections of the persons whom he addresses. And it is observable, that these pathetic effusions, drawn for the most part from his own sufferings and situation, usually precede a command, soften a rebuke, or mitigate the harshness of some disagreeable truth.

CHAPTER XV.

The Subscriptions of the Epistles.

Six of these *subscriptions* are false or improbable; that is, they are either absolutely contradicted by the contents of the epistle, or are difficult to be reconciled with them.

I. The subscription of the First Epistle to the Corinthians states that it was written from Philippi, notwithstanding that, in the sixteenth chapter and the eighth verse of the epistle, St. Paul informs the Corinthians that he will "tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost;" and notwithstanding that he begins the salutations in the epistle by

son your fellow-traveller imports that you are then upon your travels. If he had, upon any former occasion, travelled with you, you might afterwards speak of him under that title. It is just so with the term fellow-prisoner.

telling them "the churches of Asia salute you;" a pretty evident indication that he himself was in Asia at this time.

II. The Epistle to the Galatians is by the subscription dated from Rome; yet, in the epistle itself, St. Paul expresses his surprise "that they were *so soon* removing from him that called them;" whereas his journey to Rome was ten years posterior to the conversion of the Galatians. And what, I think, is more conclusive, the author, though speaking of himself in this more than any other epistle, does not once mention his bonds, or call himself a prisoner; which he had not failed to do in every one of the four epistles written from that city, and during that imprisonment.

III. The First Epistle to the Thessalonians was written, the subscription tells us, from Athens; yet the epistle refers expressly to the coming of Timotheus from Thessalonica, ch. iii. 6, and the history informs us, Acts xviii. 5, that Timothy came out of Macedonia to St. Paul at *Corinth*.

IV. The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians is dated, and without any discoverable reason, from Athens also. If it be truly the *second;* if it refer, as it appears to do, ch. ii. 2, to the first, and the first was written from Corinth, the place must be erroneously assigned, for the history does not allow us to suppose that St. Paul, after he had reached Corinth, went back to Athens.

V. The First Epistle to Timothy the subscription asserts to have been sent from Laodicea; yet, when St. Paul writes, "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, πορευομενος εις Μακεδονιαν (when I set out for Macedonia,") the reader is naturally led to conclude, that he wrote the letter upon his arrival in that country.

VI. The Epistle to Titus is dated from Nicopolis in Macedonia, whilst no city of that name is known to have existed in that province.

The use, and the only use, which I make of these observations, is to show how easily errors and contradictions steal in where the writer is not guided by original knowledge. There are only eleven distinct assignments of date to St. Paul's Epistles (for the four written from Rome may be considered as plainly contemporary;) and of these, six seem to be erroneous. I do not attribute any authority to these subscriptions. I believe them to have been conjectures founded sometimes upon loose traditions, but more generally upon a consideration of some particular text, without sufficiently comparing it with other parts of the epistle, with different epistles, or with the history. Suppose then that the subscriptions had come down to us as authentic parts of the epistles, there would have been more contrarieties and difficulties arising out of these final verses, than from all the rest of the volume. Yet, if the epistles had been forged, the whole must have been made up of the same elements as those of which the subscriptions are composed, viz. tradition, conjecture, and inference: and it would have remained to be accounted for how, whilst so many errors were crowded into the concluding clauses of the letters, so much consistency should be preserved in other parts.

The same reflection arises from observing the oversights and mistakes which learned men have committed, when arguing upon allusions which relate to time and place, or when endeavouring to digest scattered circumstances into a continued story. It is indeed the same case; for these subscriptions must be regarded as ancient scholia, and as nothing more. Of this liability to error I can present the reader with a notable instance; and which I bring forward for no other purpose than that to which I apply the erroneous subscriptions. Ludovicus Capellus, in that part of his Historia Apostolica Illustrata, which is entitled *De Ordine* Epist. Paul., writing upon the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, triumphs unmercifully over the want of sagacity in Baronius, who, it seems, makes St. Paul write his Epistle to Titus from Macedonia upon his second visit into that province; whereas it appears from the history, that Titus, instead of being at Crete, where the epistle places him, was at that time sent by the apostle from Macedonia to Corinth.—"Animadvertere est," says Capellus, "magnam hominis illius αξλειψιαν, qui vult Titum a Paulo in Cretam abductum, illicque relictum, cum inde Nicopolim navigaret, quem tamen agnoscit a Paulo ex Macedonia missum esse Corinthum." This probably will be thought a detection of inconsistency in Baronius. But what is the most remarkable is, that in the same chapter in which he thus indulges his contempt of Baronius's judgment, Capellus himself falls into an error of the same kind, and more gross and palpable than that which he reproves. For he begins the chapter by stating the Second Epistle to the Corinthians and the First Epistle to Timothy to be nearly contemporary: to have been both written during the apostle's second visit into Macedonia; and that a doubt subsisted concerning the immediate priority of their dates: "Posterior ad eosdem Corinthios Epistola, et Prior ad Timotheum certant de prioritate, et sub judice lis est; utraque autem scripta est paulo postquam Paulus Epheso discessisset, adeoque dum Macedoniam peragraret, sed utra tempore præcedat, nonliquet." Now, in the first place, it is highly improbable that the two epistles should have been written either nearly together, or during the same journey through Macedonia; for, in the Epistle to the Corinthians, Timothy appears to have been *with* St. Paul; in the epistle addressed to him, to have been left behind at Ephesus, and not only left behind, but directed to continue there till St. Paul should return to that city. In the second place it is inconceivable, that a question should be proposed concerning the priority of date of the two epistles; for, when St. Paul, in his Epistle to Timothy, opens his address to him by saying, "as I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia," no reader can doubt but that he here refers to the *last* interview which had passed between them; that he had not seen him since; whereas if the epistle be posterior to that to the Corinthians, yet written upon the same visit into Macedonia, this could not be true; for as Timothy was along with St. Paul when he wrote to the Corinthians, he must, upon this supposition, have passed over to St. Paul in Macedonia after he had been left by him at Ephesus, and must have returned to Ephesus again before the epistle was written. What misled Ludovicus Capellus was simply this,—that he had entirely overlooked Timothy's name in the superscription of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Which oversight appears not only in the quotation which we have given, but from his telling us, as he does, that Timothy came from Ephesus to St. Paul at *Corinth*, whereas the superscription proves that Timothy was already with St. Paul when he wrote to the Corinthians from Macedonia.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Conclusion.

In the outset of this inquiry, the reader was directed to consider the Acts of the Apostles and the thirteen epistles of St. Paul as certain ancient manuscripts lately discovered in the closet of some celebrated library. We have adhered to this view of the subject. External evidence of every kind has been removed out of sight; and our endeavours have been employed to collect the indications of truth and authenticity, which appeared to exist in the writings themselves, and to result from a comparison of their different parts. It is not however necessary to continue this supposition longer. The testimony which other remains of contemporary, or the monuments of adjoining ages afford to the reception, notoriety, and public estimation of a book, form, no doubt, the first proof of its genuineness. And in no books whatever is this proof more complete, than in those at present under our consideration. The inquiries of learned men, and, above all, of the excellent Lardner, who never overstates a point of evidence, and whose fidelity in citing his authorities has in no one instance been impeached, have established, concerning these writings, the following propositions:

I. That in the age immediately posterior to that in which St. Paul lived, his letters were publicly read and acknowledged.

Some of them are quoted or alluded to by almost every Christian writer that followed, by Clement of Rome, by Hermas, by Ignatius, by Polycarp, disciples or contemporaries of the apostles; by Justin Martyr, by the churches of Gaul, by Irenæus, by Athenagoras, by Theophilus, by Clement of Alexandria, by Hermias, by Tertullian, who occupied the succeeding age. Now when we find a book quoted or referred to by an ancient author, we are entitled to conclude, that it was read and received in the age and country in which that author lived. And this conclusion does not, in any degree, rest upon the judgment or character of the author making such reference. Proceeding by this rule, we have, concerning the First Epistle to the Corinthians in particular, within forty years after the epistle was written, evidence, not only of its being extant at Corinth, but of its being known and read at Rome.—Clement, bishop of that city, writing to the church of Corinth, uses these words: "Take into your hands the epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle. What did he at first write unto you in the beginning of the Gospel? Verily he did by the Spirit admonish you concerning himself, and Cephas, and Apollos, because that even then you did form parties."* This was written at a time when probably some must have been living at Corinth, who remembered St. Paul's ministry there and the receipt of the epistle. The testimony is still more valuable, as it shows that the epistles were preserved in the churches to which they were sent, and that they were spread and propagated from them to the rest of the Christian community. Agreeably to which natural mode and order of their publication, Tertullian, a century afterwards, for proof of the integrity and genuineness of the apostolic writings, bids "any one, who is willing to exercise his curiosity profitably in the business of their salvation, to visit the apostolical churches, in which their very authentic letters are recited, ipsæ authenticæ literæ eorum recitantur." Then he goes on: "Is Achaia near you? You have Corinth. If you are not far from Macedonia, you have Philippi, you have Thessalonica. If you can go to Asia, you have Ephesus; but if you are near to Italy, you have Rome."* I adduce this passage to show, that the distinct churches or Christian societies, to which St. Paul's epistles were sent, subsisted for some ages afterwards; that his several epistles were all along respectively read in those churches; that Christians at large received them from those churches, and appealed to those churches for their originality and authenticity.

Arguing in like manner from citations and allusions, we have, within the space of a hundred and fifty years from the time that the first of St. Paul's epistles was written, proofs of almost all of them being read, in Palestine, Syria, the countries of Asia Minor, in Egypt, in that part of Africa which used the Latin tongue, in Greece, Italy, and Gaul.† I do not mean simply to assert, that within the space of a hundred and fifty years, St. Paul's epistles were read in those countries, for I believe that they were read and circulated from the beginning; but that proofs of their being so read occur within that period. And when it is considered how few of the primitive Christians wrote, and of what was written how much is lost, we are to account it extraordinary, or rather as a sure proof of the extensiveness of the reputation of these writings, and of the general respect in which they were held, that so many testimonies, and of such antiquity, are still extant. "In the remaining works of Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, there are perhaps more and larger quotations of the small volume of the New Testament, than of all the works of Cicero, in the writings of all characters for several ages."‡ We must add, that all the epistles of Paul come in for their full share of this observation; and that all the thirteen epistles, except that to Philemon, which is not quoted by Irenæus or Clement, and which probably escaped notice merely by its brevity, are severally cited, and expressly recognised as St. Paul's by each of these Christian writers. The Ebionites, an early though inconsiderable Christian sect, rejected St. Paul and his epistles;§ that is, they rejected these epistles, not because they were not, but because they were St. Paul's; and because, adhering to the obligation of the Jewish law, they chose to dispute his doctrine and authority. Their suffrage as to the genuineness of the epistles does not contradict that of other Christians. Marcion, an heretical writer in the former part of the second century, is said by Tertullian to have rejected three of the epistles which we now receive, viz. the two Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus. It appears to me not improbable, that Marcion might make some such distinction as this, that no apostolic epistle was to be admitted which was not read or attested by the church to which it was sent; for it is remarkable that, together with these epistles to private persons, he rejected also the catholic epistles. Now the catholic epistles and the epistles to private persons agree in the circumstances of wanting this particular species of attest-

* See Lardner, vol. xii. p. 22.

* Lardner, vol. ii. p. 595.
† See Lardner's Recapitulation, vol. xii. p. 53.
‡ Ibid. vol. xii. p. 53.
§ Lardner, vol. ii. p. 808.

ation. Marcion, it seems, acknowledged the Epistle to Philemon, and is upbraided for his inconsistency in doing so by Tertullian,* who asks "why when he received a letter written to a single person, he should refuse two to Timothy and one to Titus composed upon the affairs of the church?" This passage so far favours our account of Marcion's objection, as it shows that the objection was supposed by Tertullian to have been founded in something which belonged to the nature of a private letter.

Nothing of the works of Marcion remains. Probably he was, after all, a rash, arbitrary, licentious critic, (if he deserved indeed the name of critic,) and who offered no reason for his determination. What St. Jerome says of him intimates this, and is besides founded in good sense: Speaking of him and Basilides, "If they assigned any reasons," says he, "why they did not reckon these epistles," viz. the First and Second to Timothy, and the Epistle to Titus, "to be the apostle's, we would have endeavoured to have answered them, and perhaps might have satisfied the reader: but when they take upon them, by their own authority, to pronounce one epistle to be Paul's and another not, they can only be replied to in the same manner."† Let it be remembered, however, that Marcion received ten of these epistles. His authority, therefore, even if his credit had been better than it is, forms a very small exception to the uniformity of the evidence. Of Basilides we know still less than we do of Marcion. The same observation, however, belongs to him, viz. that his objection, as far as appears from this passage of St. Jerome, was confined to the three private epistles. Yet is this the only opinion which can be said to disturb the consent of the first two centuries of the Christian era: for as to Tatian, who is reported by Jerome alone to have rejected some of St. Paul's epistles, the extravagant or rather delirious notions into which he fell, take away all weight and credit from his judgment.——If, indeed, Jerome's account of this circumstance be correct; for it appears from much older writers than Jerome, that Tatian owned and used many of these epistles.‡

II. They, who in those ages disputed about so many other points, agreed in acknowledging the Scriptures now before us. Contending sects appealed to them in their controversies with equal and unreserved submission. When they were urged by one side, however they might be interpreted or misinterpreted by the other, their authority was not questioned. "Reliqui omnes," says Irenæus, speaking of Marcion, "falso scientiæ nomine inflati, scripturas quidem confitentur, interpretationes vero convertunt."§

III. When the genuineness of some other writings which were in circulation, and even of a few which are now received into the canon, was contested, these were never called into dispute. Whatever was the objection, or whether in truth there ever was any real objection, to the authenticity of the Second Epistle of Peter, the Second and Third of John, the Epistle of James, or that of Jude, or to the book of the Revelation of St. John; the doubts that appeared to have been entertained concerning them, exceedingly strengthen the force of the testimony as to those writings about which there was no doubt; because it shows, that the matter was a subject, amongst the early Christians, of examination and discussion; and that where there was any room to doubt, they did doubt.

What Eusebius hath left upon the subject is directly to the purpose of this observation. Eusebius, it is well known, divided the ecclesiastical writings which were extant in his time into three classes: the "ανανταρρητα, uncontradicted," as he calls them in one chapter; or, "scriptures universally acknowledged," as he calls them in another; the "controverted, yet well known and approved by many;" and the "spurious." What were the shades of difference in the books of the second, or of those in the third class; or what it was precisely that he meant by the term *spurious*, it is not necessary in this place to inquire. It is sufficient for us to find, that the thirteen epistles of St. Paul are placed by him in the first class without any sort of hesitation or doubt.

It is farther also to be collected from the chapter in which this distinction is laid down, "that the method made use of by Eusebius, and by the Christians of his time, viz. the close of the third century, in judging concerning the sacred authority of any books, was to inquire after and consider the testimony of those who lived near the age of the Apostles."*

IV. That no ancient writing, which is attested as these epistles are, hath had its authenticity disproved, or is in fact questioned. The controversies which have been moved concerning suspected writings, as the epistles, for instance, of Phalaris, or the eighteen epistles of Cicero, begin by showing that this attestation is wanting. That being proved, the question is thrown back upon internal marks of spuriousness, or authenticity; and in these the dispute is occupied. In which disputes it is to be observed, that the contested writings are commonly attacked by arguments drawn from some opposition which they betray to "authentic history," to "true epistles," to the "real sentiments or circumstances of the author whom they personate;"† which authentic history, which true epistles, which real sentiments themselves, are no other than ancient documents, whose early existence and reception can be proved, in the manner in which the writings before us are traced up to the age of their reputed author, or to ages near to his. A modern who sits down to compose the history of some ancient period, has no stronger evidence to appeal to for the most confident assertion, or the most undisputed fact that he delivers, than writings, whose genuineness is proved by the same medium through which we evince the authenticity of ours. Nor, whilst he can have recourse to such authorities as these, does he apprehend any uncertainty in his accounts, from the suspicion of spuriousness or imposture in his materials.

V. It cannot be shown that any forgeries, properly so called,‡ that is, writings published under the name of the person who did not compose them, made their appearance in the first century of the

* Lardner, vol. xiv. p. 455. † Ibid. vol. xiv. p. 458.
‡ Ibid. vol. i. p. 313.
§ Iren. advers. Hær. quoted by Lardner, vol. xv. p. 425.

* Lardner, vol. viii. p. 106.
† See the tracts written in the controversy between Tunstal and Middleton upon certain suspected epistles ascribed to Cicero.
‡ I believe that there is a great deal of truth in Dr. Lardner's observation, that comparatively few of those books which we call apocryphal were strictly and originally forgeries.—See Lardner, vol. xii. p. 107.

Christian era, in which century these epistles undoubtedly existed.—I shall set down under this proposition the guarded words of Lardner himself: "There are no quotations of any books of them (spurious and apocryphal books) in the apostolical fathers, by whom I mean Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, whose writings reach from the year of our Lord 70 to the year 108. *I say this confidently, because I think it has been proved.*"—Lardner, vol. xii. p. 158.

Nor when they did appear were they much used by the primitive Christians. "Irenæus quotes not any of these books. He mentions some of them, but he never quotes them. The same may be said of Tertullian: he has mentioned a book called 'Acts of Paul and Thecla:' but it is only to condemn it. Clement of Alexandria and Origen have mentioned and quoted several such books, but never as authority, and sometimes with express marks of dislike. Eusebius quoted no such books in any of his works. He has mentioned them indeed, but how? Not by way of approbation, but to show that they were of little or no value; and that they never were received by the sounder part of Christians." Now if with this, which is advanced after the most minute and diligent examination, we compare what the same cautious writer had before said of our received Scriptures, "that in the works of three only of the above-mentioned fathers, there are more and larger quotations of the small volume of the New Testament, than of all the works of Cicero in the writers of all characters for several ages;" and if with the marks of obscurity or condemnation, which accompanied the mention of the several apocryphal Christian writings, when they happened to be mentioned at all, we contrast what Dr. Lardner's work completely and in detail makes out concerning the writings which we defend, and what, having so made out, he thought himself authorized in his conclusion to assert, that these books were not only received from the beginning, but received with the greatest respect; have been publicly and solemnly read in the assemblies of Christians throughout the world, in every age from that time to this; early translated into the languages of divers countries and people; commentaries writ to explain and illustrate them; quoted by way of proof in all arguments of a religious nature; recommended to the perusal of unbelievers, as containing the authentic account of the Christian doctrine; when we attend, I say, to this representation, we perceive in it not only full proof of the early notoriety of these books, but a clear and sensible line of discrimination, which separates these from the pretensions of any others.

The epistles of St. Paul stand particularly free of any doubt or confusion that might arise from this source. Until the conclusion of the fourth century, no intimation appears of any attempt whatever being made to counterfeit these writings; and then it appears only of a single and obscure instance. Jerome, who flourished in the year 392, has this expression: "Legunt quidam et ad Laodicenses; sed ab omnibus exploditur;" there is also an Epistle to the Laodiceans, but it is rejected by every body.* Theodoret, who wrote in the year 423, speaks of this epistle in the same terms.†

Beside these, I know not whether any ancient writer mentions it. It was certainly unnoticed during the first three centuries of the church; and when it came afterwards to be mentioned, it was mentioned only to show, that, though such a writing did exist, it obtained no credit. It is probable that the forgery to which Jerome alludes, is the epistle which we now have under that title. If so, as hath been already observed, it is nothing more than a collection of sentences from the genuine epistles; and was perhaps, at first, rather the exercise of some idle pen, than any serious attempt to impose a forgery upon the public. Of an Epistle to the Corinthians under St. Paul's name, which was brought into Europe in the present century, antiquity is entirely silent. It was unheard of for sixteen centuries; and at this day, though it be extant, and was first found in the Armenian language, it is not, by the Christians of that country, received into their Scriptures. I hope, after this, that there is no reader who will think there is any competition of credit, or of external proof, between these and the received Epistles; or rather, who will not acknowledge the evidence of authenticity to be confirmed by the want of success which attended imposture.

When we take into our hands the letters which the suffrage and consent of antiquity hath thus transmitted to us, the first thing that strikes our attention is the air of reality and business, as well as of seriousness and conviction, which pervades the whole. Let the sceptic read them. If he be not sensible of these qualities in them, the argument can have no weight with him. If he be; if he perceive in almost every page the language of a mind actuated by real occasions, and operating upon real circumstances, I would wish it to be observed, that the proof which arises from this perception is not to be deemed occult or imaginary, because it is incapable of being drawn out in words, or of being conveyed to the apprehension of the reader in any other way, than by sending him to the books themselves.

And here, in its proper place, comes in the argument which it has been the office of these pages to unfold. St. Paul's epistles are connected with the history by their particularity, and by the numerous circumstances which are found in them. When we descend to an examination and comparison of these circumstances, we not only observe the history and the epistles to be independent documents unknown to, or at least unconsulted by, each other, but we find the substance, and oftentimes very minute articles, of the history, recognized in the epistles, by allusions and references, which can neither be imputed to *design*, nor, without a foundation in truth, be accounted for by accident; by hints and expressions, and single words dropping as it were fortuitously from the pen of the writer, or drawn forth, each by some occasion proper to the place in which it occurs, but widely removed from any view to consistency or agreement. These, we know, are effects which reality naturally produces, but which, without reality at the bottom, can hardly be conceived to exist.

When therefore, with a body of external evidence, which is relied upon, and which experience proves may safely be relied upon, in appreciating the credit of ancient writings, we combine charac-

* Lardner, vol. x. p. 103. † Ibid. vol. xi. p. 83.

ters of genuineness and originality which are not found, and which, in the nature and order of things, cannot be expected to be found in spurious compositions; whatever difficulties we may meet with in other topics of the Christian evidence, we can have little in yielding our assent to the following conclusions: That there was such a person as St. Paul; that he lived in the age which we ascribe to him; that he went about preaching the religion of which Jesus Christ was the founder; and that the letters which we now read were actually written by him upon the subject, and in the course of that his ministry.

And if it be true that we are in possession of the very letters which St. Paul wrote, let us consider what confirmation they afford to the Christian history. In my opinion they substantiate the whole transaction. The great object of modern research is to come at the epistolary correspondence of the times. Amidst the obscurities, the silence, or the contradictions of history, if a letter can be found, we regard it as the discovery of a landmark; as that by which we can correct, adjust, or supply the imperfections and uncertainties of other accounts. One cause of the superior credit which is attributed to letters is this, that the facts which they disclose generally come out *incidentally*, and therefore without design to mislead the public by false or exaggerated accounts. This reason may be applied to St. Paul's epistles with as much justice as to any letters whatever. Nothing could be farther from the intention of the writer than to record any part of his history. That his history was in *fact* made public by these letters, and has by the same means been transmitted to future ages, is a secondary and unthought-of effect. The sincerity therefore of the apostle's declarations cannot reasonably be disputed; at least we are sure that it was not vitiated by any desire of setting himself off to the public at large. But these letters form a part of the muniments of Christianity, as much to be valued for their contents, as for their originality. A more inestimable treasure the care of antiquity could not have sent down to us. Beside the proof they afford of the general reality of St. Paul's history, of the knowledge which the author of the Acts of the Apostles had obtained of that history, and the consequent probability that he was, what he professes himself to have been, a companion of the apostles; beside the support they lend to these important inferences, they meet specifically some of the principal objections upon which the adversaries of Christianity have thought proper to rely. In particular they show,—

I. That Christianity was not a story set on foot amidst the confusions which attended and immediately preceded the destruction of Jerusalem; when many extravagant reports were circulated, when men's minds were broken by terror and distress, when amidst the tumults that surrounded them inquiry was impracticable. These letters show incontestably that the religion had fixed and established itself before this state of things took place.

II. Whereas it hath been insinuated, that our Gospels may have been made up of reports and stories, which were current at the time, we may observe that, with respect to the Epistles, this is impossible. A man cannot write the history of his own life from reports; nor, what is the same thing, be led by reports to refer to passages and transactions in which he states himself to have been immediately present and active. I do not allow that this insinuation is applied to the historical part of the New Testament with any colour of justice or probability; but I say, that to the Epistles it is not applicable at all.

III. These letters prove that the converts to Christianity were not drawn from the barbarous, the mean, or the ignorant set of men which the representations of infidelity would sometimes make them. We learn from letters the character not only of the writer, but, in some measure, of the persons to whom they are written. To suppose that these letters were addressed to a rude tribe, incapable of thought or reflection, is just as reasonable as to suppose Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding to have been written for the instruction of savages. Whatever may be thought of these letters in other respects, either of diction or argument, they are certainly removed as far as possible from the habits and comprehension of a barbarous people.

IV. St. Paul's history, I mean so much of it as may be collected from his letters, is so *implicated* with that of the other apostles, and with the substance indeed of the Christian history itself, that I apprehend it will be found impossible to admit St. Paul's story (I do not speak of the miraculous part of it) to be true, and yet to reject the rest as fabulous. For instance, can any one believe that there was such a man as Paul, a preacher of Christianity in the age which we assign to him, and *not* believe that there was also at the same time such a man as Peter and James, and other apostles, who had been companions of Christ during his life, and who after his death published and avowed the same things concerning him which Paul taught? Judea, and especially Jerusalem, was the scene of Christ's ministry. The witnesses of his miracles lived there. St. Paul, by his own account, as well as that of his historian, appears to have frequently visited that city; to have carried on a communication with the church there; to have associated with the rulers and elders of that church, who were some of them apostles; to have acted, as occasions offered, in correspondence, and sometimes in conjunction with them. Can it, after this, be doubted, but that the religion and the general facts relating to it, which St. Paul appears by his letters to have delivered to the several churches which he established at a distance, were at the same time taught and published at Jerusalem itself, the place where the business was transacted; and taught and published by those who had attended the founder of the institution in his miraculous, or pretendedly miraculous, ministry?

It is observable, for so it appears both in the Epistles and from the Acts of the Apostles, that Jerusalem, and the society of believers in that city, long continued the centre from which the missionaries of the religion issued, with which all other churches maintained a correspondence and connexion, to which they referred their doubts, and to whose relief, in times of public distress, they remitted their charitable assistance. This observation I think material, because it proves that this was not the case of giving our accounts in one country of what is transacted in another, without affording the hearers an opportunity of knowing whether the things related were credited by any, or even published, in the place where they are reported to have passed.

V. St. Paul's letters furnish evidence (and what better evidence than a man's own letters can be desired?) of the soundness and sobriety of his judgment. His caution in distinguishing between the occasional suggestions of inspiration, and the ordinary exercise of his natural understanding, is without example in the history of human enthusiasm. His morality is every where calm, pure, and rational; adapted to the condition, the activity, and the business of social life, and of its various relations; free from the overscrupulousness and austerities of superstition, and from what was more perhaps to be apprehended, the abstractions of quietism, and the soarings and extravagancies of fanaticism. His judgment concerning a hesitating conscience; his opinion of the moral indifferency of many actions, yet of the prudence and even the duty of compliance, where non-compliance would produce evil effects upon the minds of the persons who observed it, is as correct and just as the most liberal and enlightened moralist could form at this day. The accuracy of modern ethics has found nothing to amend in these determinations.

What Lord Lyttleton has remarked of the preference ascribed by St. Paul to inward rectitude of principle above every other religious accomplishment, is very material to our present purpose. "In his First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xiii. 1—3, St. Paul has these words: *Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* Is this the language of enthusiasm? Did ever enthusiast prefer that universal benevolence which comprehendeth all moral virtues, and which, as appeareth by the following verses, is meant by charity here; did ever enthusiast, I say, prefer that benevolence" (which we may add is attainable by every man) "to faith and to miracles, to those religious opinions which he had embraced, and to those supernatural graces and gifts which he imagined he had acquired; nay, even to the merit of martyrdom? Is it not the genius of enthusiasm to set moral virtues infinitely below the merit of faith; and of all moral virtues to value that least which is most particularly enforced by St. Paul, a spirit of candour, moderation, and peace? Certainly neither the temper nor the opinions of a man subject to fanatic delusions are to be found in this passage."—*Lord Lyttleton's Considerations on the Conversion, &c.*

I see no reason therefore to question the integrity of his understanding. To call him a visionary, because he appealed to visions; or an enthusiast, because he pretended to inspiration, is to take the whole question for granted. It is to take for granted that no such visions or inspirations existed: at least it is to assume, contrary to his own assertions, that he had no other proofs than these to offer of his mission, or of the truth of his relations.

One thing I allow, that his letters every where discover great zeal and earnestness in the cause in which he was engaged; that is to say, he was convinced of the truth of what he taught; he was deeply impressed, but not more so than the occasion merited, with a sense of its importance. This produces a corresponding animation and solicitude in the exercise of his ministry. But would not these considerations, supposing them to be well founded, have holden the same place, and produced the same effect, in a mind the strongest and the most sedate?

VI. These letters are decisive as to the sufferings of the author; also as to the distressed state of the Christian church, and the dangers which attended the preaching of the Gospel.

"Whereof I Paul am made a minister; who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church," Col. ch. i. 24.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," 1 Cor. ch. xv. 9.

"Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" 1 Cor. ch. xv. 30, &c.

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. chap. viii. 17, 18.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," Rom. ch. viii. 35, 36.

"Rejoicing in hope, *patient in tribulation*, continuing instant in prayer," Rom. ch. xii. 12.

"Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I suppose therefore that this is good *for the present distress;* I say, that it is good for a man so to be," 1 Cor. ch. vii. 25, 26.

"For unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me," Phil. ch. i. 29, 30.

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

"From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus," Gal. ch. vi. 14, 17.

"Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost," 1 Thess. ch. i. 6.

"We ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure," 2 Thess. chap. i. 4.

We may seem to have accumulated texts unnecessarily; but beside that the point which they are brought to prove is of great importance, there is this also to be remarked in every one of the passages cited, that the allusion is drawn from the writer by the argument or the occasion; that the notice which is taken of his sufferings, and of the suffering condition of Christianity, is perfectly in-

cidental, and is dictated by no design of stating the facts themselves. Indeed they are not stated at all; they may rather be said to be assumed. This is a distinction upon which we have relied a good deal in former parts of this treatise; and, where the writer's information cannot be doubted, it always, in my opinion, adds greatly to the value and credit of the testimony.

If any reader require from the apostle more direct and explicit assertions of the same thing, he will receive full satisfaction in the following quotations.

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness," 2 Cor. ch. xi. 23—28.

Can it be necessary to add more? "I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day," 1 Cor. ch. iv. 9—13. I subjoin this passage to the former, because it extends to the other apostles of Christianity much of that which St. Paul declared concerning himself.

In the following quotations, the reference to the author's sufferings is accompanied with a specification of time and place, and with an appeal for the truth of what he declares to the knowledge of the persons whom he addresses: "Even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, *as ye know, at Philippi*, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention," 1 Thess. ch. ii. 2.

"But *thou hast fully known* my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at *Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra:* what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me," 2 Tim. ch. iii. 10, 11.

I apprehend that to this point, as far as the testimony of St. Paul is credited, the evidence from his letters is complete and full. It appears under every form in which it could appear, by occasional allusions and by direct assertions, by general declarations, and by specific examples.

VII. St. Paul in these letters asserts, in positive and unequivocal terms, his performance of miracles strictly and properly so called.

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles (ενεργων δυναμεις) among you, doth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. chap. iii. 5.

"For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me,* to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders (εν δυναμει σημειων και τερατων,) by the power of the Spirit of God: so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ," Rom. ch. xv. 18, 19.

"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds," (εν σημειοις και τερασι και δυναμεσι,†) 2 Cor. ch. xii. 12.

These words, signs, wonders, and mighty deeds, (σημεια, και τερατα, και δυναμεις,) are the specific appropriate terms throughout the New Testament, employed when public sensible miracles are intended to be expressed. This will appear by consulting, amongst other places, the texts referred to in the note;‡ and it cannot be known that they are ever employed to express any thing else.

Secondly, these words not only denote miracles as opposed to natural effects, but they denote visible, and what may be called external, miracles, as distinguished,

First, from *inspiration.* If St. Paul had meant to refer only to secret illuminations of his understanding, or secret influences upon his will or affections, he could not, with truth, have represented them as "signs and wonders *wrought* by him," or "signs and wonders and mighty deeds wrought *amongst* them."

Secondly, from *visions.* These would not, by any means, satisfy the force of the terms, "signs, wonders, and mighty deeds;" still less could they be said to be "*wrought* by him," or "*wrought amongst* them:" nor are these terms and expressions any where applied to visions. When our author alludes to the supernatural communications which he had received, either by vision or otherwise, he uses expressions suited to the nature of the subject, but very different from the words which we have quoted. He calls them revelations, but never signs, wonders, or mighty deeds. "I will come," says he, "to visions and *revelations* of the Lord;" and then proceeds to describe a particular instance, and afterwards adds, "lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh."

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* *i. e.* "I will speak of nothing but what Christ hath wrought by *me*;" or, as Grotius interprets it, "Christ hath wrought so great things by me, that I will not dare to say what he hath not wrought."

† To these may be added the following indirect allusions, which, though if they had stood alone, *i. e.* without plainer texts in the same writings, they might have been accounted dubious; yet, when considered in conjunction with the passages already cited, can hardly receive any other interpretation than that which we give them.

"My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of men's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God," 1 Cor. ch. ii. 4—6.

"The Gospel, whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power," Ephes. ch. iii. 7.

"For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles," Gal. ch. ii. 8.

"For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," 1 Thess. ch. i. 5.

‡ Mark xvi. 20. Luke xxiii. 8. John ii. 11, 23; iii. 2; iv. 48, 54; xi. 49. Acts ii. 22; iv. 3; v. 12; vi. 8; vii. 16; xiv. 3; xv. 12. Heb. ii. 4.

Upon the whole, the matter admits of no softening qualification, or ambiguity whatever. If St. Paul did not work actual, sensible public miracles, he has knowingly, in these letters, borne his testimony to a falsehood. I need not add, that, in two also of the quotations, he has advanced his assertion in the face of those persons amongst whom he declares the miracles to have been wrought.

Let it be remembered that the Acts of the Apostles described various particular miracles wrought by St. Paul, which in their nature answers to the terms and expressions which we have seen to be used by St. Paul himself.

Here then we have a man of liberal attainments, and in other points of sound judgment, who had addicted his life to the service of the Gospel. We see him, in the prosecution of his purpose, travelling from country to country enduring every species of hardship, encountering every extremity of danger, assaulted by the populace, punished by the magistrates, scourged, beat, stoned, left for dead; expecting, wherever he came, a renewal of the same treatment, and the same dangers, yet, when driven from one city, preaching in the next; spending his whole time in the employment, sacrificing to it his pleasures, his ease, his safety; persisting in this course to old age, unaltered by the experience of perverseness, ingratitude, prejudice, desertion; unsubdued by anxiety, want, labour, persecutions; unwearied by long confinement, undismayed by the prospect of death. Such was St. Paul. We have his letters in our hands; we have also a history purporting to be written by one of his fellow-travellers, and appearing, by a comparison with these letters, certainly to have been written by some person well acquainted with the transactions of his life. From the letters, as well as from the history, we gather not only the account which we have stated of *him*, but that he was one out of many who acted and suffered in the same manner; and that of those who did so, several had been the companions of Christ's ministry, the ocular witnesses, or pretending to be such, of his miracles, and of his resurrection. We moreover find this same person referring in his letters to his supernatural conversion, the particulars and accompanying circumstances of which are related in the history, and which accompanying circumstances, if all or any of them be true, render it impossible to have been a delusion. We also find him positively, and in appropriated terms, asserting that he himself worked miracles, strictly and properly so called, in support of the mission which he executed; the history, meanwhile, recording various passages of his ministry, which come up to the extent of this assertion. The question is, whether falsehood was ever attested by evidence like this. Falsehoods, we know, have found their way into reports, into tradition, into books; but is an example to be met with, of a man voluntarily undertaking a life of want and pain, of incessant fatigue, of continual peril; submitting to the loss of his home and country, to stripes and stoning, to tedious imprisonment, and the constant expectation of a violent death, for the sake of carrying about a story of what was false, and of what, if false, he must have known to be so?

THE

CLERGYMAN'S COMPANION

IN

VISITING THE SICK:

CONTAINING,

I. Rules for visiting the sick.—II. The office for the visitation of the sick. III. The communion of the sick.—IV. A great variety of occasional prayers for the sick; collected from the writings of some of the most eminent divines of the church of england:—to which are added, the offices of public and private baptism, with additions and alterations.

PREFACE.

This collection has been so much esteemed, that it has passed through nine editions. Having now become exceedingly scarce, it was thought proper to reprint it.

The rules for Visiting the Sick, in five sections, are extracted chiefly from the works of Bishop Taylor. The Occasional Prayers are taken from the devotional tracts of Bishop Patrick, Mr. Kettlewell, and other pious and judicious divines. But in this Edition, the antiquated style of those writers is corrected and improved; at the same time, a spirit of rational piety, and unaffected simplicity, are carefully preserved.

A prayer by Dr. Stonehouse, and four by Mr. Merrick, the celebrated translator of the Psalms, are added to the old collection.

The offices of Public and Private Baptism, though no ways relating to the Visitation of the Sick, are retained; as, in the present form, they will be convenient for the Clergy in the course of their parochial duty.

CANON LXVII.

MINISTERS TO VISIT THE SICK.

When any person is dangerously sick in any parish, the minister or curate, having knowledge thereof, shall resort unto him, or her, (if the disease be not known, or probably suspected to be infectious,) to instruct and comfort them in their distress, according to the order of Communion, if he be no preacher; or, if he be a preacher, then as he shall think most needful and convenient.

It is recommended to the Clergy to write out the prayers, which are to be used by the Sick themselves, or by the persons whose devotions they wish to assist, and to leave the copies with them.

THE

MANNER OF VISITING THE SICK;

OR,

ASSISTANCE THAT IS TO BE GIVEN TO SICK AND DYING PERSONS BY THE MINISTRY OF THE CLERGY.

SECTION I.

In all the days of our spiritual warfare, from our baptism to our burial, God has appointed his servants the ministers of the church, to supply the necessities of the people, by ecclesiastical duties; and prudently to guide, and carefully to judge concerning, souls committed to their charge.

And, therefore, they who all their lifetime derive blessings from the Fountain of Grace, by the channels of ecclesiastical ministers, ought then more especially to do it in the time of their sickness, when their needs are more prevalent, according to that known apostolical injunction: "Is any man sick among you, let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him," &c.

The sum of the duties and offices, respectively implied in these words, may be collected from the following rules.

SECTION II.

Rules for the Manner of Visiting the Sick.

1. Let the minister be sent to, not when the sick is in the agonies of death, as it is usual to do, but before his sickness increases too much upon him: for when the soul is confused and disturbed by the violence of the distemper, and death begins to stare the man in the face, there is little reason to hope for any good effect from the spiritual man's visitation. For how can any regular administration take place, when the man is all over in a disorder? how can he be called upon to confess his sins, when his tongue falters, and his memory fails him? how can he receive any benefit by the prayers which are offered up for him, when he is not able to give attention to them? or how can he be comforted upon any sure grounds of reason or religion, when his reason is just expiring, and all his notions of religion together with it? or when the man, perhaps, had never any real sentiments of religion before?

It is, therefore, a matter of sad consideration, that the generality of the world look upon the minister, in the time of their sickness, as the sure forerunner of death; and think his office so much relates to another world, that he is not to be treated with, as long as there is any hope of living in this. Whereas it is highly requisite the minister be sent for, when the sick person is able to be conversed with and instructed; and can understand, or be taught to understand, the case of his soul, and the rules of his conscience, and all the several bearings of religion, with respect to God, his neighbour, and himself. For to prepare a soul for its change is a work of great difficulty; and the intercourses of the minister with the sick have so much variety in them, that they are not to be transacted at once. Sometimes there is need of special remedies against impatience, and the fear of death; not only to animate, but to make the person desirous and willing to die. Sometimes it is requisite to awaken the conscience by "the terrors of the Lord;" to open by degrees all the labyrinths of sin (those innumerable windings and turnings which insensibly lead men into destruction,) which the habitual sensualist can never be able to discover, unless directed by the particular grace of God, and the assistance of a faithful and judicious guide. Sometimes there is need of the balm of comfort, to pour in "oil and wine" (with the good Samaritan) into the bleeding wound, by representing the tender mercies of God, and the love of his Son Jesus Christ, to mankind: and at other times it will be necessary to "reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine:" so that a clergyman's duty, in the visitation of the sick, is not over at once: but at one time he must pray; at another, he must assist, advise, and direct; at another, he must open to him the nature of repentance, and exhort him to a confession of his sins, both to God and man, in all those cases which require it: and, at another time, he must give him absolution, and the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord.

And, indeed, he that ought to watch all the periods of his life, in the days of his health, lest he should be surprised and overcome, had need, when he is sick, be assisted and called upon, and reminded of the several parts of his duty in every instant of his temptation.

The want of this makes the visitations of the clergy fruitless, because they are not suffered to imprint those proper effects upon the sick, which are needful in so important a ministration.

2. When the minister is come, let him discourse concerning the causes of sickness, and by a general argument move him to a consideration of his condition. Let him call upon him first, in general terms, "to set his house in order," "to trim and adorn his lamp," and "to prepare himself for another world;" and then let him perform the customary duties of prayer, and afterwards descend to other particulars, as occasion shall offer, and circumstances require.

3. According to the condition of the man, and

the nature of his sickness, every act of visitation is to be proportioned. If his condition be full of pain and infirmity, the exhortation ought to be shortened, and the minister more "instant in prayer:" and the little service the sick man can do for himself should be supplied by the charitable care of his guide, who is in such a case to speak more to God for him than to talk to him: "prayer of the righteous," when it is "fervent," hath a promise to "prevail much in behalf of the sick" person: but exhortations must prevail by their own proper weight, and not by the passion of the speaker; and, therefore, should be offered when the sick is able to receive them. And even in this assistance of prayer, if the sick man joins with the minister, the prayers should be short, fervent, and ejaculatory, apt rather to comply with his weak condition, than wearisome to his spirits, in tedious and long offices. But in case it appears he hath sufficient strength to go along with the minister, he is then more at liberty to offer up long petitions for him.

After the minister hath made this preparatory entrance to this work of much time and deliberation, he may descend to the particulars of his duty, in the following method.

SECTION III.

Of instructing the sick Man in the nature of Repentance, and Confession of his Sins.

The first duty to be rightly stated to the sick man, is that of repentance; in which the minister cannot be more serviceable to him than by laying before him a regular scheme of it, and exhorting him at the same time to a free and ingenuous declaration of the state of his soul. For unless they know the manner of his life and the several kinds and degrees of those sins which require his penitential sorrow or restitution, either they can do nothing at all, or nothing of advantage and certainty. Wherefore the minister may move him to this in the following manner:

Arguments and Exhortations to move the sick Man to Repentance, and Confession of his Sins.

1. That repentance is a duty indispensably necessary to salvation. That to this end, all the preachings and endeavours of the prophets and apostles are directed. That our Saviour "came down from heaven," on purpose "to call sinners to repentance."* That as it is a necessary duty at all times, so more especially in the time of sickness, when we are commanded in a particular manner to "set our house in order." That it is a work of great difficulty, consisting in general of a "change of mind," and a "change of life." Upon which account it is called in Scripture, "a state of regeneration, or new birth;" a "conversion from sin to God;" a "being renewed in the spirit of our minds;" a "putting off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts of the flesh," and a "putting on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness." That so great a change as this, is not to be effected at once, but requires the utmost self-denial and resolution to put it in execution, consisting in general of the following particulars:—1. A sorrowful sense of our sins: 2. An humble confession of them: 3. An unfeigned abhorrence and forsaking of them, and turning to the Lord our God with all our hearts: 4. A patient continuance in well-doing to the end of our lives.

These are the constituent and essential parts of a true repentance; which may severally be displayed from the following motives of reason and Scripture, as opportunity shall serve, and the sick man's condition permit.

The first part of a true repentance is a sorrowful sense of our sins, which naturally produceth this good effect, as we may learn from St. Paul, (2 Cor. vii. 10,) where he tells us, that "godly sorrow worketh repentance." Without it, to be sure, there can be no such thing; for how can a man repent of that which he is not sorry for? or, how can any one sincerely ask pardon and forgiveness for what he is not concerned or troubled about?

A sorrowful sense, then, of our sins, is the first part of a true repentance, the necessity whereof may be seen from the grievous and abominable nature of sin; as, 1. That it made so wide a separation betwixt God and man, that nothing but the blood of his only begotten Son could suffice to atone for its intolerable guilt: 2. That it carries along with it the basest ingratitude, as being done against our heavenly Father, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being:" 3. That the consequence of it is nothing less than eternal ruin, in that "the wrath of God is revealed against all impenitent sinners;" and "the wages of sin is death,"—not only temporal but eternal.

From these and the like considerations, the penitent may further learn, that to be sorry for our sins is a great and important duty. That it does not consist in a little trivial concern, a superficial sigh, or tear, or calling ourselves sinners, &c. but in a real, ingenuous, pungent, and afflicting sorrow: for, can that which cast our parents out of Paradise at first, that brought down the Son of God afterwards from heaven, and put him at last to such a cruel and shameful death, be now thought to be done away by a single tear or a groan? Can so base a piece of ingratitude, as rebelling against the Lord of glory, who gives us all we have, be supposed to be pardoned by a slender submission? Or can that which deserves the torment of hell, be sufficiently atoned for by a little indignation and superficial remorse?

True repentance, therefore, is ever accompanied with a deep and afflicting sorrow; a sorrow that will make us so irreconcilable to sin, as that we shall choose rather to die than to live in it. For so the bitterest accents of grief are all ascribed to a true repentance in Scripture; such as a "weeping sorely," or "bitterly;" a "weeping day and night;" a "repenting in dust and ashes;" a "putting on sackcloth;" "fasting and prayer," &c. Thus holy David: "I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long, and that by reason of mine iniquities, which are gone over my head, and, as a heavy burden, are too heavy for me to bear:" Ps. xxxviii. 4, 6. Thus Ephraim could say: "After that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth:" Jer. xxxi. 19.

* Matt. ix. 13.

And this is the proper satisfaction for sin which God expects, and hath promised to accept; as, Ps. li. 17: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

2. The next thing requisite in a true repentance, is confession of sins, which naturally follows the other; for if a man be so deeply afflicted with sorrow for his sins, he will be glad to be rid of them as soon as he can; and the way for this, is humbly to confess them to God, who hath promised to forgive us if we do. "I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord," saith the Psalmist; "and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin," Ps. xxxii. 6. So, Prov. xxviii. 13, and 1 John i. 9: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So the returning prodigal went to his father with an humble confession of his baseness, and was received into favour again.—Luke xv. 18, 19.

And because the number of our sins are like the hairs of our head, or the sand of the sea, and almost as various too in their kinds as their numbers; confession must needs be a very extensive duty, and require the strictest care and examination of ourselves: for "who can tell how oft he offendeth?" saith David; "O, cleanse thou me from my secret faults!"

The penitent, therefore, should be reminded, that his confession be as minute and particular as it can; since the more particular the confession is, to be sure, the more sincere and safe the repentance.

3. A third thing requisite in a true repentance, is an unfeigned abhorrence and forsaking of sin, and turning to the Lord our God with all our hearts.

For so we find them expressly joined together by St. Paul, when he *charges* those whom by vision he was sent to convert, to change* their mind, and "turn to God, and do works meet for repentance:" Acts xxvi. 20. And a little before, he says, he was sent "to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sin:" ver. 18. And we shall always find, when we are commanded to cease from evil, it is in order to do good.

The penitent, therefore, must be reminded, not only to *confess* and be *sorry* for his sins, but likewise to *forsake* them. For it is he only "who confesseth and forsaketh his sins, that shall have mercy:" Prov. xxviii. 13. And this forsaking must not be only for the present, during his sickness, or for a week, a month, or a year; but for his whole life, be it never so protracted: which is the

4. Last thing requisite in a true repentance, viz. "a patient continuance in well-doing to the end of our lives." For as the holy Jesus assures us, that "he that endureth unto the end shall be saved;" so does the Spirit of God profess, that "if any man draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in him:" Heb. x. 38. Hence we are said to "be partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end," Heb. iii. 14, but not else; for it is to "him only that overcometh, and keepeth his works to the end," that our Saviour hath promised a reward: Rev. ii. 26. Hence our religion is said to be a continual warfare, and we must be constantly "pressing forward toward the mark of our high calling," with the apostle, lest we fail of the prize.

And this it is which makes a death-bed repentance so justly reckoned to be very full of hazard; such as none who defer it till then, can depend upon with any real security. For let a man be never so seemingly penitent in the day of his visitation, yet none but God can tell whether it be sincere or not; since nothing is more common than for those who expressed the greatest signs of a lasting repentance upon a sick bed, to forget all their vows and promises of amendment, as soon as God had removed the judgment, and restored them to their former health. "It happened to them according to the true proverb," as St. Peter says, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire," 2 Pet. ii. 22.

The sick penitent, therefore, should be often reminded of this:—that nothing will be looked upon as true repentance, but what would terminate in a holy life: that, therefore, he ought to take great heed, that his repentance be not only the effect of his present danger, but that it be lasting and sincere, "bringing forth works meet for repentance," should it please God mercifully to prove him by a longer life.

But here it is much to be feared, that after all his endeavours to bring men to a sight of themselves, and to repent them truly of their sins, the spiritual man will meet with but very little encouragement: for if we look round the world, we shall find the generality of men to be of a rude indifference, and a seared conscience, and mightily ignorant of their condition with respect to another world, being abused by evil customs and principles, apt to excuse themselves, and to be content with a certain general and indefinite confession; so that if you provoke them never so much to acknowledge their faults, you shall hardly ever extort any thing farther from them than this, viz. "That they are sinners, as every man hath his infirmity, and they as well as any; but, God be thanked, they have done no injury to any man, but are in charity with all the world." And, perhaps they will tell you, "they are no swearers, no adulterers, no rebels, &c. but that, God forgive them, they must needs acknowledge themselves to be sinners in the main," &c. And if you can open their breasts so far, it will be looked upon as sufficient; to go any farther, will be to do the office of an accuser, not of a friend.

But, which is yet worse, there are a great many persons who have been so used to an habitual course of sin, that the crime is made natural and necessary to them, and they have no remorse of conscience for it, but think themselves in a state of security very often when they stand upon the brink of damnation. This happens in the cases of drunkenness and lewd practices, and luxury, and idleness, and misspending of the sabbath, and in lying and vain jesting, and slandering of others; and particularly in such evils as the laws do not punish, nor public customs shame, but which are countenanced by potent sinners, or wicked fashions, or good-nature and mistaken civilities.

In these and the like cases, the spiritual man must endeavour to awaken their consciences by such means as follow:

* απηγγελλον μετανοειν.

Arguments and general Heads of Discourse, by way of Consideration, to awaken a stupid Conscience, and the careless Sinner.

1. And here let the minister endeavour to affect his conscience, by representing to him,—

That Christianity is a holy and strict religion: that the promises of heaven are so great, that it is not reasonable to think a small matter and a little duty will procure it for us: that religious persons are always the most scrupulous; and that to feel nothing, is not a sign of life, but of death: that we live in an age in which that which is called and esteemed a holy life, in the days of the apostles and primitive Christianity would have been esteemed indifferent, sometimes scandalous, and always cold: that when we have "done our best, all our righteousness is but as filthy rags;" and we can never do too much to make our "calling and election sure:" that every good man ought to be suspicious of himself, fearing the worst, that he may provide for the best: that even St. Paul, and several other remarkable saints, had at some times great apprehensions of failing of the "mighty prize of their high calling:" that we are commanded to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling;" inasmuch as we shall be called to an account, not only for our sinful words and deeds, but even for our very thoughts: that if we keep all the commandments of God, and "yet offend in one point (*i. e.* wilfully and habitually,) we are guilty of all," James ii. 10: that no man can tell how oft he offendeth, the best of lives being full of innumerable blemishes in the sight of God, however they may appear before men; that no man ought to judge of the state of his soul by the character he has in the world; for a great many persons go to hell, who have lived in a fair reputation here; and a great many, on the other hand, go to heaven, who have been loaded with infamy and reproach: that the work of religion is a work of great difficulty, trial, and temptation: that "many are called, but few are chosen;" that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it:" and lastly, that, "if the righteous themselves shall scarcely be saved," there will be no place for the unrighteous and sinner to appear in, but of horror and amazement.

By these and such-like motives to consideration, the spiritual man is to awaken the careless sinner, and to bring him to repentance and confession of his sins; and if either of himself, or by this means, the sick man is brought to a right sense of his condition: then,

2. Let the minister proceed to assist him in understanding the number of his sins, *i. e.* the several kinds of them, and the various ways of prevaricating with the Divine commandments. Let him make him sensible how every sin is aggravated, more or less, according to the different circumstances of it; as by the greatness or smallness of the temptation, the scandal it gives to others, the dishonour it does to religion, the injury it brings along with it to those whom it more immediately concerns; the degrees of boldness and impudence, the choice in acting it, the continuance in it, the expense, desires, and habit of it, &c.

3. Let the sick man, in the scrutiny of his conscience and confession of his sins, be carefully reminded to consider those sins which are no where condemned but in the *court of conscience:* for there are certain secret places of darkness, artificial blinds of the devil, which he uses to hide our sins from us, and to incorporate them into our affections, by the general practice of others, and the mistaken notions of the world: as, 1. Many sins before men are accounted honourable; such as fighting a duel, returning evil for evil, blow for blow, &c. 2 Some things are not forbidden by the law of man, as lying in ordinary discourse, jeering, scoffing, intemperate eating, ingratitude, circumventing another in contracts, outwitting and overreaching in bargains, extorting and taking advantage of the necessities or ignorance of other people, importunate entreaties and temptations of persons to many instances of sin, as intemperance, pride, and ambition, &c.; all which, therefore, do strangely blind the understanding and captivate the affections of sinful men, and lead them into a thousand snares of the devil which they are not aware of. 3. Some others do not reckon that they sin against God, if the laws have seized upon the person: and many who are imprisoned for debt, think themselves disengaged from payment; and when they pay the penalty, think they owe nothing for the scandal and disobedience. 4. Some sins are thought not considerable, but go under the titles of sins of infirmity, or inseparable accidents of mortality; such as idle thoughts, foolish talking, loose revellings, impatience, anger, and all the events of evil company. 5. Lastly; many things are thought to be no sins: such as mispending of their time, whole days or months of useless or impertinent employment, long gaming, winning men's money in great portions, censuring men's actions, curiosity, equivocating in the prices of buying and selling, rudeness in speech or behaviour, speaking uncharitable truths, and the like.

These are some of those artificial veils and coverings, under the dark shadow of which the enemy of mankind makes very many to lie hid from themselves, blinding them with false notions of honour, and the mistaken opinions and practices of the world, with public permission and impunity, or (it may be) a temporal penalty; or else with prejudice, or ignorance and infirmity, and direct error in judgment.

Now, in all these cases, the ministers are to be inquisitive and strictly careful, that such kind of fallacies prevail not over the sick; but that those things, which passed without observation before, may now be brought forth, and pass under the severity of a strict and impartial censure, religious sorrow, and condemnation.

4. To this may be added a general display of the neglect and omission of our duty; for in them lies the bigger half of our failings: and yet, in many instances, they are undiscerned; because our consciences have not been made tender and perceptible of them. But whoever will cast up his accounts, even with a superficial eye, will quickly find that he hath left undone, for the generality, as many things which he ought to have done, as he hath committed those he ought not to have done: such as the neglect of public or private prayer, of reading the Scriptures, and instructing his family, or those that are under him, in the principles of religion: the not discountenancing sin to the utmost of his power, especially in the personages of great men: the "not redeeming the time," and "growing in grace," and doing all the good he can in his generation: the frequent omissions of the great duty of charity, in visiting the sick, relieving the needy, and comforting the afflicted: the want of obedience, duty, and respect to

parents: the doing the work of God negligently, or not discharging himself with that fidelity, care, and exactness, which is incumbent upon him, in the station wherein the providence of God hath placed him, &c.

5. With respect to those sins which are committed against man, let the minister represent to the sick man that he can have no assurance of his pardon, unless he is willing to make all suitable amends and satisfaction to his offended and injured brethren; as for instance, if he hath lived in enmity with any, that he should labour to be reconciled to them; if he is in debt, that he should do his utmost to discharge it; or if he hath injured any one in his substance or credit, that he should endeavour to make restitution in kind for the one, and all possible satisfaction for the other, by humbling himself to the offended person, and beseeching him to forgive him.

6. If the sick person be of evil report, the minister should take care, some way or other, to make him sensible of it, so as to show an effectual sorrow and repentance. This will be best done by prudent hints, and insinuations, of recalling those things to his mind whereof he is accused by the voice of fame, or to which the temptations, perhaps, of his calling, more immediately subject him. Or if he will not understand, when he is secretly prompted, he must be asked in plain terms concerning these matters. He must be told of the evil things which are spoken of him in public, and of the usual temptations of his calling.

And it concerns the minister to follow this advice, without partiality, or fear, or interest, or respect of persons, in much simplicity and prudence, having no other consideration before him, but the conscientious discharge of his duty, and the salvation of the person under his care.

7. The sick person is likewise to be instructed concerning his faith, whether he has a reasonable notion of the articles of the Christian religion, as they are excellently summed up in the Apostle's Creed.

8. With respect to his temporal concerns, the sick is to be advised to set every thing in order, and (if he hath not already) to make his will as soon as he can. For if he recovers, this cannot be detrimental; but, if he dies, it will be of great comfort and satisfaction to him. And here it must be remembered that he distribute every thing according to the exact rules of justice, and with such a due care, as to prevent all law-suits and contentions for the future: and, if he be able, he is to be admonished to do something likewise out of charity, and for the sake of his poor brethren.

9. In all the course of his visitation, the minister should frequently be exhorting the sick man to patience and a blessed resignation to the will of God; and not to look upon his sickness as barely the effect of second causes, but as inflicted on him by Divine Providence for several wise and good ends: As, for the trial of his faith; the exercise of patience; the punishment of his sins; the amendment of his life; or for the example of others, who, seeing his good behaviour in such a day of calamity, may glorify their Father which is in heaven: or else, that it is for the increase of his future welfare, in order to raise him the higher in glory hereafter, by how much the lower he hath been depressed here.

10. When the spiritual man hath thus discharged his duty, and the sick hath made himself capable of it, by a religious and holy conformity to all the forementioned particulars respecting his condition and circumstances, he may then give him the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And it is the minister's office to invite sick and dying persons to this holy sacrament, provided they discover a right sense of their duty. And,

Note, That the Holy Sacrament is not to be administered to dying persons, when they have no use of their reason to join with the minister in his celebration of it. For the sacraments operate not of themselves, but as they are made efficacious by the joint consent and will, and religious acts and devotion of the party that receives them. And therefore all fools, and distracted persons, and children, and lethargical and apoplectical people, or that are any ways senseless and incapable of human and reasonable acts, are to be assisted only by prayers.

Note also, That in cases of necessity, where the sacrament cannot be so conveniently administered, the sick may be admonished to receive it spiritually, *i. e.* by representing the symbols of the body and blood of our Lord to his mind, and applying them to himself by faith, with the same preparations of faith and repentance, as if they were really present. For no doubt but God, in such a case, who considers all things with exact justice, and chiefly respects the sincerity of our hearts and intentions, will excuse the absence of the outward and visible sign, when necessity, and not contempt or neglect, was the occasion of it.

SECTION IV.

Of applying spiritual Remedies to the unreasonable Fears and Dejections of the Sick.

It sometimes happens that good men, especially such as have tender consciences, impatient of the least sin, to which they are arrived by a long habit of grace, and a continual observation of their ways, overact their part, and turn their tenderness into scruples, and are too much dejected and doubtful concerning their future salvation. In such a case, the minister is to represent to them, that the man who is jealous of himself, is always in the safest condition: that if he fears on his death-bed, it is but what happens to most considering men; and that therefore to fear nothing then, is either a singular felicity, or a dangerous presumption.

But to restrain the extravagance of fear, let him be reminded of the terms of the Gospel:—that it is a covenant of grace and mercy to all: that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners:" that he continues our "Advocate in heaven," and daily "intercedes" with his Father for us: that the whole heavenly host rejoices at the conversion of a sinner: that the angels are deputed by God, to be our guardians against violent surprises and temptations: that there are different degrees of glory in heaven; so that, if we arrive not at the greatest, we may yet hope, by divine mercy, that we should not be excluded the less: that God hath promised to hear the "prayers of the righteous" for his servants: that he labours with us by his Spirit, and as it were "beseeches us, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to him," 2 Cor. v. 20: that, of all his attributes, he glories in none so much as

in the titles of mercy and forgiveness: that therefore we do injustice to the Father of mercies, if we retain such hard thoughts and suspicions of him: that God calls upon us to forgive our brother "seventy times seven;" and yet all that is but like the forgiving "an hundred pence," for his sake, who forgives us "ten thousand talents:" and therefore if we are ordered to show such an unrestrained temper of forgiveness, it is only to animate us to trust in God's much more unbounded mercy.

By these and the like arguments, the spiritual man may raise the drooping spirits of good men, in their causeless dejections. But because there are many other cases of the like nature, which the physician of souls will meet with in visiting his neighbours, especially such as are of melancholy dispositions, it may not be improper to mark the principal of them here, and to prescribe the remedies.

Considerations to be offered to Persons under Religious Melancholy.

1. Some truly religious persons are under sad apprehensions of not being in the favour of God, because they find their devotions to be very often cold, their prayers distracted, and their delight in spiritual matters not to be so great and permanent as their pleasure and satisfaction are in the things of the world.

Now to such as have made religion the great business of their lives, who have endeavoured to cure those distracted thoughts they complain of, and to inflame their souls with divine love, it may be offered, that the different degrees of affection with which men serve God, do very often depend upon the difference of their tempers and constitutions; since some are naturally so dull and heavy, as to be little affected with any thing; whilst others are of such a tender make, as to be affected almost with every thing, so as to be soon exalted with joy, or depressed with sorrow: that sickness, losses, and all afflictions, and even religion itself, in its long and continual exercise of self-denial and thoughtfulness, do naturally produce such a tenderness of spirit, that the best of men have never been able at all times to keep their affections at an equal height: that the zeal and warmth with which some are affected, is not always an argument of their goodness: that a sensible pleasure in religious exercises, wherein the passions are affected, is not so acceptable to God as a reasonable service: that distraction of thought in the service of God is owing, for the most part, to bodily weakness; and therefore, if we do not give way to it, but do all we can to suppress those wandering thoughts, we may be assured we shall never be blamed for being subject to that which, by reason of the weakness of our nature, we cannot help: that the first motions of our mind, as it is impossible to hinder them, are reckoned by all divines not to be sinful, provided we do not encourage them.

2. Some are extremely dejected, because, upon strict examination of themselves, they find, as they think, all their religion to be owing to their fears; and fear being a slavish and sordid passion, they are apt to conclude, that all those services which are not the result of a more noble principle, will be rejected by God, since, as he is all love, and goodness, and perfection, he will not be pleased, they think, with any sacrifice, but what is offered by love.

And to this sad purpose, some have interpreted Rev. xxi. 8, to belong to them, where the fearful are joined together with the most abominable, who shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

To cure the depraved and unhappy notions of such as these, it may be argued: that it is plain from Scripture, that the first beginnings of, or movements towards, an holy life, are usually owing to the passion of fear: that to this, both our Saviour and his apostles do all along address themselves in their earnest entreaties of mankind to turn from the ways of sin to God.—"Fear him," saith our Saviour, "who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," Matth. x. 28; so chap. vi. 15; Mark xvi. 16. And to this purpose the apostle says, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12, and 2 Cor. v. 11, "Knowing the terrors of the Lord," saith he, "we persuade men." And in most of the Scripture proofs, we shall find the chief argument of religion to be urged from a fear of punishment for the neglect thereof: so that to be dejected, and render our lives comfortless on this account, were the most unreasonable extravagance; since this were to suppose, that God hath implanted the passion of fear in us in vain; or, what is worse, only to vex and torment us; and that our Saviour and his apostles, persuading us to be religious from the terrors of the Lord, had deceived and misled us.

And as for that text, Rev. xxi. 8—"The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," &c. it is plain, that by the fearful in this place is meant, either such as refuse to embrace the Christian religion, or who, having embraced it, are afraid to continue steadfast to the end, on account of the cross; and therefore cannot be supposed to have any reference to those who are "working out their salvation with fear and trembling," according to the direction of the Gospel. Not but that we are to intermix with this fear an entire love and affection to God, to the utmost of our powers.

3. Some very pious but unhappy persons, are grievously tormented with wicked and blasphemous thoughts, so as to fall under the greatest agonies of mind; and often to be so near distraction, as to choose death rather than life.

For the relief and comfort of these, the minister should suggest to them, that such horrid and frightful thoughts are either occasioned through melancholy prevailing over their spirits, and disordering the frame of their minds; or else from the malice of the devil, and the spirits of darkness, who do all they can to shake our faith, and to embitter the Christian life.

If to the former we ascribe such horrid thoughts, they may be comforted upon assurance, that they will not be imputed to them as their sin, any more than a fever or any bodily distemper will, which they did not willingly procure, and which they have tried all means to remove.

If to the latter, they may be encouraged rather to rejoice; as nothing is a greater sign of their being high in the favour of God, than when they are under the most violent temptations of the devil. "My brethren, count it all joy," saith St. James, "when ye fall into divers temptations;" chap. i. 2. To that effect, they may be taught to consider, that the way to heaven is justly said to be

by the gates of hell: that the "same afflictions are accomplished in their brethren which are in the world," who in various kinds are tempted of the tempter; 1 Peter v. 9: that Satan "desired to have St. Peter to sift him as wheat;" Luke xxii. 31: that our Saviour himself was tempted by him, and the best of men have always been most obnoxious to his malice; and that to live in carnal security, without any molestations from him, is the most dangerous state: that the being so much concerned and afflicted at such evil thoughts, is a certain argument of a good disposition, since the wicked and profane are rather pleased than tormented with them.

Arguments of this kind are the most proper to be offered to such unhappy persons: but in case their faith and hope be totally overcome by the devil, and they fall into direct despair, it will be necessary then to endeavour the cure of so great an evil and temptation, by the addition of the following exercise:

An Exercise against Despair.

Let the minister suggest to them, that God is not willing that *any should perish*, but desirous that all should come to his glory: that for this end we were created: that he is so far from being "extreme to mark what is done amiss," that he will not refuse the returning prodigal, nor reject the worst of criminals, upon their sincere repentance: that the thief upon the cross is a demonstrable proof of this, and a standing example to prevent the greatest sinner from despair: that if God is so merciful and condescending to the vilest transgressors, much rather may we hope to be pardoned for our weakness and infirmities: for he "knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust:" nay, he hath assured us, that he "will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax:" that all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, except one, which is the sin against the Holy Ghost; "the sin unto death," as Saint John calls it.

But that no man commits a sin against the Holy Ghost, if he be afraid he hath, or desires that he may not; for such penitential passions are against the very nature and definition of that sin: that although forgiveness of sins is consigned to us in baptism, and baptism is but once; yet, forgiveness of sins being the special grace of the Gospel, it is secured to us for our life, and ebbs and flows according as we discompose or renew the performance of our baptismal vow; therefore it is certain, that no man ought to despair of pardon, but he who hath voluntarily renounced his baptism, or willingly estranged himself from that covenant: that if it were not so, then all preaching and prayers were in vain, and all the conditions of the Gospel invalid, and there could be no such thing as repentance, nor indeed scarce a possibility of any one's being saved, if all were to be concluded in a state of damnation, who had committed sin after baptism.

To have any fears, therefore, on this account, were the most extravagant madness: for Christ "died for sinners," and "God hath comprehended all under sin, that" through him "he might have mercy upon all;" Rom. xi. 32. And it was concerning baptized Christians, that Saint John said, "If any man sin we have have an Advocate with the Father, and He is the propitiation for our sins;" and concerning lapsed Christians, Saint Paul gave instruction, that "if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a man in the spirit of meekness, considering lest ye also be tempted." The Corinthian Christian committed incest, and was pardoned: and Simon Magus, after he was baptized, offered to commit the sin we call simony, and yet Peter bade him pray for pardon; and Saint James tells us, that "if the sick man send for the elders of the church, and they pray over him, and he confess his sins, they shall be forgiven him;" chap. v. 14.

That even in the case of very great sins, and great judgments inflicted upon sinners, wise and good men have declared their sense to be, that God vindicated his justice in that temporal punishment; and so it was supposed to have been done in the case of Ananias, &c.: that nothing can be more absurd than to think that so great and good a God, who is so desirous of saving all, as appears by his word, by his sending his Son, by his oaths and promises, by his very nature and daily overtures of mercy, should condemn any, without the greatest provocations of his majesty, and perseverance in them.

Upon the strength of these arguments, the despairing person may be further taught to argue thus with himself:

I consider that the ground of my trouble is my sin; and were it not for that, I should have no reason to be troubled; but since the "whole world lieth in wickedness," and since there cannot be a greater demonstration of a man's abhorrence of sin, than to be so deeply affected with sorrow for it; I therefore will erect my head with a holy hope, and think that God will also be merciful to me a sinner, as he is to the rest of mankind. I know that the mercies of God are infinite; that he sent his Son into the world on purpose to redeem such as myself; and that he hath repeatedly promised "to give to them that ask, and to be found of them that seek him;" and therefore I will not distrust his goodness, nor look upon the great God of heaven and earth to be worse than his word. Indeed, if from myself I were to derive my title to heaven, then my sins were a just argument of despair: but now that they bring me to Christ, that they drive me to an appeal to God's mercy, they cannot infer a just cause of despair. I am sure it is a stranger thing, that the Son of God should come down from heaven, and take upon him our nature, and live and die in the most ignominious state of it, than that a sinful man, washed by the blood of Christ, and his own tears and humiliation, should be admitted to pardon, and made "partaker of the kingdom of heaven:" and it were stranger yet, that he should do so much for man, and that a man that desires, that labours after it to the utmost of his power, that sends up strong cries and prayers, and is still within the covenant of grace, should inevitably miss that end for which our Saviour did and suffered so much.

It is certain, that of all the attributes that belong to God, there is none more essential to his nature, and which he takes more delight in, than his mercy; and it is as certain also, there must be proper objects for this boundless and immense attribute of God; and the most proper, if not only, objects of mercy in the creation, are the children of men; and of men, surely those who are most grieved and wearied with the burthen of their sins. I, therefore, who am as pitiful an object of mercy as any, will cheerfully hope, that God

will both forgive me here, and give me the blessing of eternal life hereafter: for I know that *eternal life is* purely the *gift of God*, and therefore have less reason still to despair. For if my sins were fewer, and my unworthiness of such a glory were less, yet still I could not receive it but as a free gift and donation of God, and so I may now; and it is not expectation beyond the hopes of possibility, to look and wait for such a gift at the hands of the God of mercy. The best of men deserve it not; and I, who am the worst, may have it given me. I know that I have sinned grievously and frequently against my heavenly Father: but I have repented, I have begged pardon, I have confessed and forsaken my sins, and have done all that is possible for me to make atonement. I cannot undo what is done; and I perish, if there be no such thing as a remedy, or remission of sins. But then I know my religion must perish together with my hope, and the word of God itself must fail as well as I. But I cannot, I dare not entertain such a thought. I firmly believe that most encouraging article of faith, *the remission of sins;* and since I do that which all good men call repentance, I will also humbly hope for a remission of mine, and a joyful resurrection.

I know that the devil is continually lying in wait to seduce and destroy the souls of men; wherefore I will fortify my spirits, and redouble my guard, and call upon God to enable me to resist all the fiery darts of this malicious adversary.

Or perhaps this exceeding dejection, or malady of mind, may arise from the distemper and weakness of my body; or at most, I hope, it is only a disease of judgment, not an intolerable condition, I am fallen into: and since I have heard of a great many others who have been in the same condition with myself, and yet recovered, I will also take courage to hope that God will relieve me in his good time, and not leave my soul for ever in this hell of depraved fancy and wicked imagination. In fine, I will raise up my dejected spirits, and cast all my care upon God, and depend upon him for the event, which I am sure will be just; and I cannot but think, from the same reason, full of mercy. However, now I will use all the spiritual arts of reason and religion, to make me more and more desirous of loving God: that if I miscarry, charity also shall fail, and something that loves God shall perish, and be damned: which if it be impossible (as I am sure it is,) then I may have just reason to hope I shall do well.

These considerations may be of service to "bind up the broken hearted," and to strengthen the "bruised reed," of a good man's spirit, in so great and terrible a dejection. But as cases of this nature are very rare, so the arguments here made use of are rarely to be insisted upon; and never, but to well-disposed persons, or reformed penitents, or to such as in the general course of their life, have lived pretty strictly, and conformably to the rules of religion. For if the man be a vicious person, and hath gone on in a continual course of sin, to the time of his sickness, these considerations are not proper. Let him inquire, in the words of the first disciples after Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" And if we can but entertain so much hope, as to enable him to do as much of his duty as he can for the present, it is all that can be provided for him. And the minister must be infinitely careful, that he does not attempt to comfort vicious persons with the comfort of God's elect, lest he prostitute holy things, and encourage vice, and render his discourses deceitful; and the man unhappily find them to be so when he descends into the regions of darkness.

But because very few are tempted with too great fears of miscarrying, but the generality even of the most profligate sort, are rather inclined to unwarrantable assurances of their future salvation, it will highly concern the ministers to prevent in time so great and reigning an imposition of the devil.

Wherefore, to the former considerations to awaken the careless sinner and a stupid conscience, the following may be added, upon occasion, to check the overweening thoughts of the presumptuous.

SECTION V.

Considerations against Presumption.

And here, let the bold and arrogant sinner further know, that a man cannot think too meanly of himself, but may very easily run into the contrary extreme: that the growths in grace are long, difficult, uncertain, often interrupted, consisting of great variety, and almost innumerable parts and distinctions, which a careless person can never discover; that the more a man presumes, the greater reason he hath to fear; because the confidence of such men is generally like that of children and young people, who have no other reason, but that they understand not the dangers and follies of their self-conceits: that "the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" deceiving itself, and deceiving others, in innumerable instances; and being often "in the gall of bitterness," when the man appears with the fairest outside to the world: that it is certain, all "have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" but not so certain, that any one's repentance is real, and effective to salvation: that virtue and vice are oftentimes so near neighbours, that we pass into each other's borders without observation, and think we do justice, when we are cruel; or call ourselves liberal, when we are loose and foolish in our expenses, &c.

That the self-accusing publican was justified, rather than the self-confident Pharisee: that if Adam in Paradise, David in his house, Solomon in the temple, Peter in the family of Christ, Judas among the twelve apostles, and Nicholas among the deacons, and if the angels in heaven itself, did fall so atrociously, then we have all the reason in the world "not to be high minded, but to fear;" and when we are most confident of ourselves, "to take heed lest we fall;" there being nothing so likely to occasion it, as pride and a great opinion of ourselves, which ruined the angels, which God resists, which all men despise, and which betray us into carelessness, and a wretched, undiscerning, and unwary spirit.

These are the main parts of ecclesiastical duties and offices in the visitation of the sick; which being severally performed, as occasion requires, it remains only that the minister pray over the sick, and remind him to do all the good actions he is

capable of; to call upon God for pardon; to put his whole trust in him; to be patient and resigned; and even to renounce every ill-thought or word, or indecent action, which the violence of his sickness may have caused in him; to beg of God to give him his Holy Spirit to guide him in his agony, and to send his holy angels to guard him in his passage.

Whatsoever is besides this, concerns the standers-by, that they do all in their respective offices diligently and temperately; that they join in prayer with the minister, with much charity and devotion; that they make no outeries or exclamations on the departure of the soul, nor any positive judgment concerning the dying man, by his dying quietly or violently, with great fears or a cheerful confidence, with sense or without, like a lamb or like a lion, with convulsions and terrible agonies, or like the silent and well-spent flame of an expiring taper. For these may happen severally, according to the constitution of the persons, and the nature of the distemper that befalls them; or else according as God pleases to dispense the grace, or the punishment, for reasons only known to himself.

Let us lay our hand upon our mouth, and adore the mysteries of the divine wisdom and providence, and pray to God to give the dying man rest and pardon; and to ourselves grace to live well, and the blessings of a holy and happy death.

THE ORDER

FOR THE

VISITATION OF THE SICK.

When any Person is sick, notice shall be given thereof to the Minister of the parish, who coming into the sick Person's house, shall say,

PEACE be to this house, and to all that dwell in it.

When he cometh into the sick man's presence, he shall say, kneeling down;

REMEMBER not, Lord, our iniquities, nor the iniquities of our forefathers. Spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever.

Answ. Spare us, good Lord.

Then the Minister shall say,

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR Father, which art in heaven; Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

Minister. O Lord, save thy servant,
Answer. Which putteth *his* trust in thee.
Min. Send *him* help from thy holy place;
Ans. And evermore mightily defend *him.*
Min. Let the enemy have no advantage of *him;*
Answ. Nor the wicked approach to hurt *him.*
Min. Be unto *him,* O Lord, a strong tower,
Answ. From the face of *his* enemy.
Min. O Lord, hear our prayers:
Answ. And let our cry come unto thee.

Minister.

O LORD, look down from heaven; behold, visit, and relieve this thy servant. Look upon *him* with the eyes of thy mercy; give *him* comfort and sure confidence in thee; defend *him* from the danger of the enemy, and keep *him* in perpetual peace and safety, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HEAR us, Almighty and Most Merciful God and Saviour; extend thy accustomed goodness to this thy servant, who is grieved with sickness. Sanctify, we beseech thee, this thy fatherly correction to *him;* that the sense of *his* weakness may add strength to *his* faith, and seriousness to *his* repentance: that, if it shall be thy good pleasure to restore *him* to *his* former health, *he* may lead the residue of *his* life in thy fear, and to thy glory: or else give *him* grace so to take thy visitation, that, after this painful life is ended, *he* may dwell with thee in life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister exhort the sick Person after this form, or other like.

DEARLY beloved, know this, that Almighty God is the Lord of life and death, and of all things to them pertaining; as youth, strength, health, age, weakness, and sickness. Wherefore, whatsoever your sickness is, know you certainly, that it is God's visitation. And for what cause soever this sickness is sent unto you; whether it be to try your patience; for the example of others; and that your faith may be found in the day of the Lord, laudable, glorious, and honourable, to the increase of glory, and endless felicity; or else it be sent unto you, to correct and amend in you whatsoever doth offend the eyes of your heavenly Father: know you certainly, that if you truly repent of your sins, and bear your sickness patiently, trusting in God's mercy for his dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, and render unto him humble thanks for his fatherly visitation, submitting yourself wholly unto his will, it shall turn to your profit, and help you forward in the right way that leadeth unto everlasting life.

☞ If the Person visited be very sick, then the Curate may end his exhortation in this place, or else proceed.

TAKE, therefore, in good part, the chastisement of the Lord; for (as St. Paul saith, in the twelfth chapter to the Hebrews,) "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for, what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily, for a few days, chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." These words (good *brother*) are written in holy Scriptures for our comfort and instruction, that we should patiently and with thanksgiving bear our Heavenly Father's correction, whensoever, by

any manner of adversity, it shall please his gracious goodness to visit us. And there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses. For He himself went not up to joy, but first he suffered pain: He entered not into his glory before he was crucified. So, truly, our way to eternal joy, is to suffer here with Christ; and our door to enter into eternal life, is gladly to die with Christ, that we may rise again from death, and dwell with him in everlasting life. Now therefore, taking your sickness, which is thus profitable for you, patiently; I exhort you, in the name of God, to remember the profession which you made unto God in your baptism. And forasmuch as, after this life, there is an account to be given unto the righteous Judge, by whom all must be judged without respect of persons; I require you to examine yourself and your estate, both towards God and man; so that, accusing and condemning yourself, and your own faults, you may find mercy at your Heavenly Father's hand for Christ's sake, and not be accused and condemned in that fearful judgment. Therefore I shall rehearse to you the Articles of our Faith, that you may know whether you believe as a Christian man should, or no.

Here the Minister shall rehearse the Articles of the Faith, saying thus:

Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?

And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord; and that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; that he went down into hell, and also did rise again the third day; that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and from thence shall come again, at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead?

And dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic church; the communion of saints; the remission of sins; the resurrection of the flesh; and everlasting life after death?

The sick person shall answer,

All this I steadfastly believe.

Then shall the Minister examine whether he repent him truly of his sins, and be in charity with all the world; exhorting him to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all persons that have offended him, and, if he hath offended any other, to ask them forgiveness; and where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the utmost of his power. And, if he hath not before disposed of his goods, let him then be admonished to make his will, and to declare his debts, what he oweth, and what is owing unto him; for the better discharge of his conscience, and the quietness of his executors. But men should often be put in remembrance to take order for settling of their temporal estates, whilst they are in health.

These words, before rehearsed, may be said before the Minister begins his prayer, as he shall see cause.

The Minister should not omit earnestly to move such sick Persons as are of ability, to be liberal to the poor.

Here shall the sick Person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession, the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners, who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences! And by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

And then the Priest shall say the collect following.

Let us pray.

O most merciful God, who, according to the multitude of thy mercies, dost so put away the sins of those who truly repent, that thou remember-est them no more; open thine eye of mercy upon this thy servant, who most earnestly desireth pardon and forgiveness. Renew in *him*, most loving Father, whatsoever hath been decayed by the fraud and malice of the devil, or by *his* own carnal will and frailness; preserve and continue this sick member in the unity of the church; consider *his* contrition, accept *his* tears, assuage *his* pain, as shall seem to thee most expedient for *him*. And, forasmuch as *he* putteth *his* full trust only in thy mercy, impute not unto *him* his former sins, but strengthen *him* with thy blessed Spirit; and when thou art pleased to take *him* hence, take *him* unto thy favour, through the merits of thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister say this Psalm.

In te, Domine, speravi.—Psalm lxxi.

In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion: but rid me, and deliver me in thy righteousness; incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

Be thou a strong hold, whereunto I may alway resort: thou hast promised to help me, for thou art my house of defence, and my castle.

Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the ungodly; out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

For thou, O Lord, art the thing that I long for; thou art my hope, even from my youth.

Through thee have I been holden up ever since I was born; thou art he that took me out of my mother's womb; my praise shall always be of thee.

I am become as it were a monster to many; but my sure trust is in thee.

O let my mouth be filled with thy praise; that I may sing of thy glory and honour all the day long.

Cast me not away in the time of age: forsake me not when my strength faileth me.

For mine enemies speak against me; and they that lay wait for my soul, take their counsel together; saying, God hath forsaken him; persecute him, and take him, for there is none to deliver him.

Go not far from me, O God; my God, haste thee to help me.

Let them be confounded and perish, that are against my soul: let them be covered with shame and dishonour, that seek to do me evil.

As for me, I will patiently abide always; and will praise thee more and more.

My mouth shall daily speak of thy righteousness and salvation; for I know no end thereof.

I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God; and will make mention of thy righteousness only.

Thou, O God, hast taught me from my youth up until now: therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works.

Forsake me not, O God, in mine old age, when I am gray-headed, until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to all them that are yet for to come.

Thy righteousness, O God, is very high, and great things are they that thou hast done; O God, who is like unto thee?

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

Adding this:

O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed us, save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

Then shall the Minister say:

The Almighty Lord, who is a most strong tower to all them that put their trust in him; to whom all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, do bow and obey; be now and evermore thy defence, and make thee know and feel, that there is no other name under heaven given to man, in whom, and through whom, thou mayest receive health and salvation, but only the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

And after that shall say:

Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit thee. The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, both now and evermore. *Amen.*

THE

COMMUNION OF THE SICK.

Forasmuch as all mortal men be subject to many sudden perils, diseases, and sicknesses, and ever uncertain what time they shall depart out of this life; therefore to the intent they may be always in readiness to die whensoever it shall please Almighty God to call them, the Curates shall diligently, from time to time (but especially in time of pestilence, or other infectious sickness,) exhort their parishioners to the often receiving the Holy Communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, when it shall be publicly administered in the church; that, so doing, they may, in case of sudden visitation, have the less cause to be disquieted for lack of the same. But if the sick person be not able to come to the church, and yet is desirous to receive the Communion in his house; then he must give timely notice to the Curate, signifying also how many there are to communicate with him (which shall be three, or two at the least,) and having a convenient place in the sick man's house, with all things necessary, so prepared, that the Curate may reverently minister, he shall there celebrate the Holy Communion, beginning with the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel here following.

The Collect.

Almighty and everlasting God, maker of mankind, who dost correct those whom thou dost love, and chastisest every one whom thou dost receive; we beseech thee to have mercy upon this thy servant visited with thine hand, and to grant that *he* may take *his* sickness patiently, and recover *his* bodily health, (if it be thy gracious will;) and whenever *his* soul shall depart from the body, it may be without spot presented unto thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Epistle, Heb. xii. 5.

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

The Gospel, St. John v. 24.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

After which, the Priest shall proceed according to the form prescribed for the Holy Communion, beginning at these words: [Ye that do truly.]

At the time of the distribution of the Holy Sacrament, the Priest shall first receive the Communion himself, and afterward minister unto them that are appointed to communicate with the sick, and last of all to the sick person.

But if a man, either by reason of extremity of sickness, or for want of warning in due time to the Curate, or for lack of company to receive with him, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood, the Curate shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and steadfastly believe Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the cross for him, and shed his blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefor, he doth eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth.

When the sick person is visited, and receiveth the Holy Communion all at one time, then the Priest, for more expedition, shall cut off the form of the visitation, at the Psalm [In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust,] and go straight to the Communion.

In the time of the plague, sweat, or other such like contagious times of sickness or diseases, when none of the parish or neighbours can be gotten to communicate with the sick in their houses, for fear of the infection; upon special request of the deceased, the Minister only may communicate with him.

At the time of the celebration of the Communion, the communicants being conveniently placed for receiving of the Holy Sacrament, the Priest shall say this exhortation:

Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come to the Holy Communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament, (for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us;) so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily: for then we are guilty of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's body; we kindle God's wrath against us; we provoke him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death. Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent ye truly for your sins past; have a lively and steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men; so shall ye be meet partakers of these holy mysteries. And above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man, who did humble himself even to the death upon the

cross, for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death, that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained to us, he hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort. To Him, therefore, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks; submitting ourselves wholly to his holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest say to them that come to receive the Holy Communion,

Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.

Then shall this general confession be made, in the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion, by one of the Ministers, both he and all the people kneeling humbly upon their knees, and saying,

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous to us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father: for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest (or the Bishop being present) stand up, and, turning himself to the people, pronounce this absolution:

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him; have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest say,

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to him: Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.—Matt. xi. 28.

So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John iii. 16.

Hear also what St. Paul saith:

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.—1 Tim. i. 15.

Hear also what St. John saith:

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.—1 John ii. 1, 2.

After which, the Priest shall proceed, saying,

Lift up your hearts.

Answ. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Answ. It is meet and right so to do.

Then shall the Priest say,

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father,* Almighty, Everlasting God.

Here shall follow the proper preface, according to the time, if there be any specially appointed; or else immediately shall follow,

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts! heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. *Amen.*

Proper Prefaces.

On Christmas-day, and seven days after.

Because thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born as at this time for us, who by the operation of the Holy Ghost was made very man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother, and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin: therefore with angels, &c.

On Easter-day, and seven days after.

But chiefly are we bound to praise thee for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for He is the very paschal lamb which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sins of the world; who by his death hath destroyed death, and by his rising to life again, hath restored us to everlasting life: therefore, &c.

On Ascension-day, and seven days after.

Through thy most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who after his most glorious resurrection, manifestly appeared to all his apostles, and in their sight ascended up into heaven to prepare a place for us; that where he is thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory: therefore, &c.

On Whitsunday, and six days after.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, according to whose most true promise the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven, with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth, giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness, with fervent zeal, constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations, whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ: therefore, &c.

On the feast of Trinity only.

Who art one God, one Lord; not one only Per-

* These words [Holy Father] must be omitted on Trinity Sunday.

son, but three Persons in one substance. For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality: therefore, &c.

After each of which prefaces, shall immediately be sung or said:

THEREFORE with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying; Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts! heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest, kneeling down at the Lord's table, say, in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion, this prayer following:

WE do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. *Amen.*

When the Priest, standing before the table, hath so ordered the bread and wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the bread before the people, and take the cup into his hands, he shall say the prayer of Consecration, as followeth:

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us, to continue a perpetual memory of that his precious death, until his coming again; hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who, in the same night that he was betrayed,* took bread, and when he had given thanks,† he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat;‡ this is my body, which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper,§ he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this‖ is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins: do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. *Amen.*

Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner (if any be present,) and after that to the people also in order, into their hands, all meekly kneeling. And when he delivereth the bread to any one, he shall say:

THE body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life! Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee; and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

And the Minister that delivereth the cup to any one, shall say:

THE blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life! Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

If the consecrated bread or wine be all spent before all have communicated, the Priest is to consecrate more, according to the form before prescribed: beginning at [Our Saviour Christ in the same night, &c.] for the blessing of the bread, and [Likewise after supper, &c.] for the blessing of the cup.

When all have communicated, the Minister shall return to the Lord's table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth.

Then shall the Priest say the Lord's Prayer, the people repeating after him every petition.

OUR Father which art in heaven; Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

After this shall be said as followeth:

O LORD and heavenly Father, we thy humble servants entirely desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant, that by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that all we who are partakers of this holy communion, may be fulfilled with thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*

Or this:

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, we most heartily thank thee, for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as

* Here the priest is to take the paten into his hands.
† And here to break the bread.
‡ And here to lay his hands upon all the bread.
§ Here he is to take the cup into his hand.
‖ And here to lay his hand upon every vessel (be it chalice or flagon) in which there is any wine to be consecrated.

thou hast prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

Then shall be said or sung:

GLORY be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee, for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us: thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer: thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us:

For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

Then the Priest or Bishop (if he be present,) shall let them depart with this blessing:

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

PROPER COLLECTS

THAT MAY BE USED WITH ANY OF THE PRAYERS FOR THE SICK.

LET thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of thy humble servants; and, that we may obtain our petitions, make us to ask such things as shall please thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IN the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for succour, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased? Yet, O Lord God, most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death. Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our heart; shut not thy merciful ears to our prayers; but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, thou most worthy Judge Eternal, suffer us not at the last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from thee. *Amen.*

O MERCIFUL God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, we beseech thee to raise us from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that, at the general resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in thy sight, and may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

GRANT, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of thy grace may mercifully be relieved, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

O MOST mighty God, and merciful Father, who hast compassion upon all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, who wouldest not the death of a sinner, but that he should rather turn from his sin, and be saved; mercifully forgive us our trespasses: relieve and comfort us, who are grieved and wearied with the burden of our sins. Thy property is always to have mercy; to thee only it appertaineth to forgive sins: Spare us, therefore, good Lord, spare us whom thou hast redeemed. Enter not into judgment with thy servants, who are vile earth, and miserable sinners; but so turn thine anger from us, who meekly acknowledge our vileness, and truly repent us of our faults, and so make haste to help us in this world, that we may ever live with thee in the world to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men, that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health among all nations. More especially we pray for the good estate of the Catholic church, that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all, who profess and call themselves Christians, may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those who are any ways afflicted in mind, body, or estate; (especially *him* for whom our prayers are desired;) that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions, and this we beg for Jesus Christ his sake.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy, forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord.

O GOD, merciful Father, that despisest not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful; mercifully assist our prayers that we make before thee in all our troubles and adversities whensoever they oppress us; and graciously hear us, that those evils which the craft and subtlety of the devil or man worketh against us be brought to nought, and by the providence of thy goodness they may be dispersed; that we thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, (or afflictions,) may evermore give thanks unto thee in thy holy church; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

WE beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities, and for the glory of thy name turn from us all those evils that we most righteously have deserved; and grant that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore serve thee in holiness and pureness of living, to thy honour and glory; through our only mediator and advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who of thy tender love to mankind hast sent thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility; mercifully grant, that we may both follow

the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking, we beseech thee to have compassion upon our infirmities; and those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us for the worthiness of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK.

A general Prayer for the Acceptance of our Devotions for the Sick.

[From Bishop Andrews.]

O Lord, it is a great presumption that one sinner should dare to commend another to thy Divine Majesty. And who would not fear to undertake it? But thy commandment it is, "That we should pray for the sick members of thy church, and mourn with them that mourn:" and thou hast promised that our prayers thus made, thou wilt receive. And now behold, O Lord, we that are no way meet, but unworthy, utterly unworthy, to ask for aught for ourselves, charity and compassion so binding us, are enforced to become suitors to thee for others, even for this thy servant, now afflicted by thee. Of thee we hope; of thee we desire; to thee we pray, in the most meek and humble manner, and even from the bottom of our hearts. O Lord, that which thou mightest justly deny to our unworthiness, deny not, we beseech thee, to thine own gracious goodness. O Lord, forgive us our sins; O Lord forgive us our sins, our great and grievous sins, oft and many times committed, long and many years continued; so that we may be meet to pray for others, and our prayers be made unto thee in an acceptable time.

Graciously look upon our afflictions.

Pitifully behold the sorrows of our hearts.

Mercifully forgive the sins of thy people.

Favourably with mercy hear our prayers.

Both now and ever vouchsafe to hear us, O Christ.

Graciously hear us, O Christ; graciously hear us, O Lord Christ. *Amen.*

Particular Prayers for the Sick.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

O most gracious God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast united us all in one body, that we should love one another, and if one member suffers, all the members should suffer with it; we humbly implore thy tender mercies towards this thy servant, of whose afflicted condition we desire to have a compassionate sense and feeling.

Look graciously upon *him*, O Lord, and visit *him* with thy salvation. Vouchsafe *him* such consolations from above, as we should desire for ourselves, were we in *his* extremity. Give *him* a true penitent heart for all the offences that *he* hath at any time committed: together with a lively faith in thy Son Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners. Give *him* the comfort of a holy hope, that thou acceptest *his* repentance, and faithful devotion to thee. Support *him* by this hope under all *his* pain, and enable *him* patiently to submit to thy fatherly correction. Send *him* help now in time of need, both for *his* soul and for *his* body. Bless the means for *his* recovery; and, if it be thy good pleasure, restore *him* speedily to *his* former health, and inspire *him* with a serious resolution to serve thee more zealously all *his* days.

Or if thou hast otherwise resolved in thy wise counsels, deliver *him* from the fear of death, assist *him* in *his* last agony, give *him* an easy and cheerful passage out of this life, and send thy holy angels to conduct *him* into rest and peace with our Lord Jesus, for the same Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

[From Bishop Taylor.]

I.

Almighty God, Father of mercies, the God of peace and comfort, of rest and pardon, we thy servants, in duty to thee, and charity to our *brother*, humbly beg mercy of thee for *him*, to descend upon *his* body and *his* soul. We come to thee in the name of Jesus, praying thee to pardon the sins of this thy servant, and to bury them in the grave of Him that died for us, that they may never rise up in judgment against *him*, nor bring *him* in the day of trial, to shame and confusion of face. *Amen.*

II.

Give thy servant, O Lord, patience in *his* sorrows, comfort in *his* sickness, and restore *him* to health, if it seem good to thee. And, however thou shalt determine concerning *him*, yet make *his* repentance perfect, and *his* faith strong, and *his* hope steadfast, and *his* passage safe; that when thou shalt call *his* soul from the body, it may enter into the rest of the sons of God, and the bosom of blessedness, and be with the holy Jesus. *Amen.*

III.

O Lord, thou knowest all the necessities, and all the infirmities of thy servant: fortify *his* soul with spiritual joys, and perfect resignation; and take from *him* all inordinate affections to this world; and enlarge his heart with desires of being with thee, in thy heavenly kingdom.

IV.

Lord, let not any pain or passion discompose the order of *his* thoughts, or *his* duty; and lay no more upon thy servant than thou wilt make *him* able to bear; and together with the temptation, do thou provide a way to escape; even by the mercies of a longer and more holy life, or by the mercies of a blessed death; even as it pleaseth thee, O Lord, so let it be. *Amen.*

V.

Lord, let the tenderness of *his* conscience and the Spirit of God call to mind *his* sins, that they may be confessed and repented of: and let thy powerful grace remove from *his* soul every root of bitterness; and in the union of the holy Jesus, and in the love of God, and in the communion of all the saints, let *his* soul be presented to thee blameless, and entirely pardoned, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A larger Form of Prayer for the Sick.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

O Lord, the Father of our spirits, who givest us life, and breath, and all things, and hast not thought a crown of everlasting life too much to promise us, we believe that thou wilt not deny us what is needful and fit for us, both for our souls and our bodies, in our passage through this world, to that of honour, glory, and immortality. In this confidence, we more particularly recommend this thy sick servant to thy infinite and most compassionate mercy. Settle in *his* soul a steadfast faith, that thou dost not willingly grieve the children of men, but intendest good to *him* by this thy fatherly correction. And now since all other pleasures and enjoyments fail *him*, represent thyself more effectually unto *him*, as the only support and stay of *his* hope, and rock of salvation.—Whereinsoever *he* hath neglected thee, or committed any offence against thee, make *him* deeply sensible of it, and heartily sorrowful for all *his* transgressions. And as *he* earnestly desires pardon and forgiveness of thee, so work in *him* a serious resolution to live more circumspectly and righteously for the time to come. Assist *him* graciously, O Lord, that *he* may give a proof of *his* sincere intentions hereafter to submit *himself* in all things to thy will, by *his* patient submission to thy fatherly correction. O, that *he* may so quietly, so meekly, so humbly, and cheerfully resign *his* will unto thee, to suffer what thou inflictest, that *he* may be the more disposed to do readily whatsoever thou commandest. For which end, make *him* thoroughly apprehensive of thy sovereign power and authority over all creatures. Possess *him* with a great reverence of thy wisdom and justice, with an entire confidence in thy goodness and love, with a thankful remembrance of all thy past mercies to *him*, that so *he* may the better endure what thou layest upon *him* at present, and may ever follow thy directions, and submit to thy orders, and delight to do thy will, O God.

Bless the remedies which are used for restoring *him* to *his* former health, that *he* may live to perform *his* duty with greater care; or if thou hast otherwise appointed, accept graciously of *his* purposes of amendment, and dispose *him* to return back *his* spirit willingly unto thee who gavest it; and with great humility and deep sense of *his* own undeservings, to expect thy mercy declared in Christ Jesus. Fix *his* mind steadfastly upon him, who hath led the way through the grave unto heaven, that *he* may not be affrighted with the approaches of death, but looking beyond it to that high and holy place, where the Lord Jesus is, may rejoice in hope of eternal glory.

And grant that every one of us, in our best state of health, may consider perpetually how frail and weak we are; that so we may not abuse ourselves by an intemperate use of any sensual pleasures, nor load our minds with the cares of this life, nor spend our days in a vain pursuit of the honour and glory of this world; but may pass all the time of our sojourning here, in fear; and may live so righteously and soberly in this present world, as becomes those who expect shortly to give an account to thee, who will judge all men according to their works. Hear us, O Lord, we most humbly beseech thee, through Christ Jesus, our merciful and compassionate Redeemer. *Amen.*

Assist us mercifully, O Lord, in these our supplications and prayers, and dispose the way of thy servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; that among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

(From Doctor Hammond.)

O Lord, bless, keep, and defend this thy servant with thy heavenly grace and benediction, that *he* may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until *he* comes to thy everlasting kingdom.

Let thy mighty hand and out-stretched arm, O Lord, be ever *his* defence; thy mercy and loving-kindness in Jesus Christ thy dear Son, *his* salvation; thy true and holy word, *his* instruction; thy grace and Holy Spirit, *his* comfort and consolation, both now and at the hour of death.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.* *Amen.*

PROPER PSALMS FOR THE SICK.

I.

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine indignation: neither chasten me in thy displeasure.—Psalm vi. 1.

2. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak: O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed.—Psalm vi. 2.

3. My soul also is sore troubled: but Lord, how long wilt thou punish me?—Psalm vi. 3.

4. Thine arrows stick fast in me: and thy hand presseth me sore.—Psalm xxxviii. 2.

5. There is no health in my flesh, because of thy displeasure: neither is there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sin.—Psalm xxxviii. 3.

6. For my wickednesses are gone over my head, and are like a sore burden too heavy for me to bear.—Psalm xxxviii. 4.

7. I am feeble and sore smitten: I have roared for the very disquietness of my heart.—Psalm xxxviii. 8.

8. My heart panteth, my strength hath failed me, and the sight of mine eyes is gone from me.—Psalm xxxviii. 10.

9. Therefore is my spirit vexed within me; my heart within me is desolate.—Psalm cxliii. 4.

10. Turn thee, O Lord, and deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercies' sake.—Psalm vi. 4.

11. Hide not thy face from me in the time of my trouble: incline thine ears unto me when I call; O hear me, and that right soon.—Psalm cii. 2.

12. For my days are consumed away like smoke: my heart is smitten down and withered like grass.—Psalm cii. 3, 4.

13. And that because of thine indignation and wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.—Psalm cii. 10.

14. But I said, O my God, take me not away

* Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

in the midst of my age; forsake me not when my strength faileth me.—Psalm cii. 24.

15. Wherefore in thee, O Lord, have I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.—Psalm lxxi. 1.

II.

PSALM LI.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness: according to the multitude of thy mercies, do away mine offences.

2. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity: and cleanse me from my sin.

3. For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me.

4. Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified in thy saying, and clear when thou art judged.

5. Behold, I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

6. But, lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and thou shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

7. Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8. Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness: that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9. Turn thy face from my sins; and put out all my misdeeds.

10. Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

11. Cast me not away from thy presence: and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

12. O, give me the comfort of thy help again; and establish me with thy free Spirit.

13. Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

III.

HEAR my prayer, O Lord, and consider my desire: hearken unto me for thy truth and righteousness' sake.—Psalm cxliii. 1.

2. And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.—Psalm cxliii. 2.

3. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.—Psalm li. 17.

4. Lord thou knowest all my desire: and my groaning is not hid from thee.—Psalm xxxviii. 9.

5. I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul gaspeth unto thee, as a thirsty land.—Psalm cxliii. 6.

6. Hear me, O Lord, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.—Psalm cxliii. 7.

7. Haste thee to help me, O Lord God of my salvation.—Psalm xxxviii. 22.

8. For thou art a place to hide me in: thou shalt preserve me from trouble: thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.—Psalm xxxii. 8.

9. Into thine hands I commend my spirit: for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.—Psalm xxxi. 5.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

As it was in the beginning, &c.

A Declaration of Forgiveness.

[From Bishop Cosins.]

I DO most humbly desire all, and every one whom I have offended, that they would vouchsafe to forgive me: and I do freely and heartily forgive all the world, whereinsoever any hath offended me, or done me any manner of injury whatsoever, even as I desire to be forgiven of God, and to be absolved from my sins, for the merits of my blessed Redeemer.

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS FOR THE SICK.

A Prayer for a Person in the Beginning of his Sickness.

[From Bishop Taylor.]

O ALMIGHTY God, merciful and gracious, who in thy justice did send sorrow and tears, sickness and death, into the world, as a punishment for man's sins, and hast comprehended all under sin, and this sad covenant of sufferings,—not to destroy us, but that thou mightest have mercy upon all, making thy justice to minister to mercy, short afflictions to an eternal weight of glory; as thou hast been pleased to turn the sins of this thy servant into sickness, so turn, we beseech thee, *his* sickness to the advantage of holiness and religion, of mercy and pardon, of faith and hope, of grace and glory. Thou hast now called *him* to suffer. Lord, relieve *his* sorrow and support *his* spirit, direct *his* thoughts and sanctify *his* sickness, that the punishment of *his* sin may be to *him* a school of virtue. Make *him* behave as a son under discipline, humbly and obediently, evenly and patiently, that *he* may be brought by this means nearer to thee; that if *he* shall recover *his* former health, *he* may return to the world with greater strength of spirit, to run a new race of stricter holiness, and more severe religion; or if *he* shall pass hence through the gates of death, *he* may rejoice in the hope of being admitted into that heavenly society, in which all thy saints and servants shall be comprehended to eternal ages. Grant this, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Thankfulness in Sickness.

O GOD, wonderful both in thy mercies and judgments, grant that the sense of thy servant's present afflictions may not cause *him* to forget thy former mercies, which thou hast bestowed upon *him:* O, therefore, let the remembrance of those many and great blessings that *he* hath so long enjoyed at thy hand, be now the proper motives and incentives to the virtues of patience and humility, causing *him* cheerfully to resign himself to thy blessed will under all the dispensations of thy providence, though ever so hard; and patiently to wait for the return of thy loving-kindness in Jesus, which is better than life. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Blessing on the Means used for a sick Person's Recovery.

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

O GRACIOUS Lord, by whose word man lives and not by any human means alone; direct, we

pray thee, the counsels of those who prescribe to this thy servant, and prosper the medicines which are used to procure *him* ease and strength, but let not *his* confidence in them lessen any thing of *his* dependence on thee, but make *him* sensible that every good gift is from thee, and that it is thou that givest us help in time of need. To whom, therefore, but to thee, should we flee in the day of our visitation? since it is thy blessing only that maketh the means we use effectual; and, however vain the use of them is without thee, if thou biddest them, the things or accidents which we do not think of, or regard, shall recover us. O, therefore, as their part, who administer to *him*, is the care, so let thine, O God, be the blessing; and *his* the comfort: and as *he* regards them as thy instruments, so let *him* own thee for the Author of *his* mercies, and to thee give thanks, and pay *his* vows and services; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Person, when there appears some Hope of Recovery.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

We thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast heard our prayers for thine afflicted servant, and given *him* some respite and hopes of recovery from this great illness. Blessed be thy goodness, that *he* hath not made *his* bed in the dust, but is likely to continue still amongst us, in the land of the living. Blessed be thy goodness for so great (and lately unexpected) mercy to *him.*

And, O thou Preserver of man! who hast begun to revive and quicken *him* again; go on to perfect *his* cure, and forsake not the work of thy own hands. Repair all the decays in *his* outward man, that *his* mind may also recover its former strength, to praise and bless thy goodness to *him.*

And visit *him*, in the meantime, with thy heavenly consolation from above. Fill *him* with comfortable thoughts of thy love, and of the tender compassionate care which our Lord Jesus takes of all his afflicted servants. Endue *him* still with more patient submission to thy will, and enable *him* both quietly to wait upon thee, till thou hast finished *his* recovery, and also to continue steadfastly resolved to serve thee more faithfully with *his* restored strength, through Jesus Christ our blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

Another, in Behalf of the sick Person, when he finds any Abatement of his Distemper.

Accept, O Lord, of the unfeigned thanks of thy servant for abating the fury of *his* present distemper, and giving *him* some hopes of raising *him* up again to praise thee in the great congregation.

It is a great mercy, O Lord, and owing to thy goodness only, that *his* senses are preserved entire, and that *he* hath some respite, after so much uneasiness and pain, through the violence of *his* illness.

O perfect, if it be thy blessed will, what thou hast begun in *him*, and say to the distemper, "It is enough."

Teach *him* hence, to look up to thee continually, as the rock of *his* salvation, whence only *he* is to expect comfort and support: and give *him* grace always to make such a right use of thy favours, that *he* may daily find *himself* surrounded by the light of thy countenance, and enjoy the blessings of thy heavenly benediction in all *his* ways, whether in adversity or prosperity, in sickness or in health. Even so, blessed Lord, continue to assist, strengthen, comfort, and bless *him*, both now and for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Prayer for one who is dangerously ill.

O Almighty God, "gracious, and merciful, and long-suffering, whose compassions fail not;" look down, we beseech thee, upon the low and distressed state of thy servant, now lying in the extremity of sickness. The harder *his* illness presses upon *him*, the louder does it call upon thee for help. O be merciful therefore unto *him*, according to the necessity of *his* case, and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies in Jesus Christ. Rebuke the distemper, that it prevail not over *him* to death; but turn its malevolent aspect into a joyous expectation of life. In as great danger as *he* is, yet if thou wilt, O Lord, we know thou canst make *him* whole; if thou speakest the word, it shall be done. In submission, therefore, to thy most wise and good disposal of all things, we beg this mercy at thy hands, that thou wouldest let "this" bitter "cup pass away" from thy servant, and cause "a way for" *him* "to escape" out of this dangerous condition. O spare *him* a little, and *his* "soul shall live." *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Person when Sickness continues long upon him.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

Look down, O Lord, we humbly beseech thee, with an eye of compassion on thy poor distressed servant, who hath lain so long under this severe affliction; and by how much the outward man is decayed and brought low by the tediousness of the distemper's continuing on *him*, by so much the more do thou be pleased to support *him* in the inner man by the gracious assistance of thy Holy Spirit. Give *him* unfeigned repentance for all the errors of *his* past life, and steadfast faith in thy Son Jesus Christ; a comfortable assurance of the truth of all his precious promises, a lively hope of that immortal bliss in which he reigns for evermore, and a strong sense of thy fatherly love to *him*, and care over *him*, which may make *him* heartily love thee, and entirely confide in thee, and absolutely resign both soul and body to thy wise disposal.

We know there is nothing too hard for thee; but that if thou wilt, thou canst bring *him* up even from the gates of death, and grant *him* a longer continuance among us. May it be thy good pleasure, O most gracious God, still to continue *him* here; spare *him*, O Lord, and deliver *him* also speedily from this misery, under which *he* hath so long groaned. Bless all the means that are used for *his* recovery, and for the support of *his* spirits, and give *him* refreshment during this tedious sickness. Release *him* from *his* pain, or grant *him* some ease, or else increase and strengthen *his* patience. Help *him*, in remembrance of thy past loving-kindness, to trust in thy goodness and submit to thy wisdom, and bear with an equal mind what thou thinkest fit to lay upon *him;* so that approving *himself* to thee in these and all other virtues, while thou triest *him* by so sore an affliction, *he* may say at the last, with the holy Psalmist, "It was good for me that I was in trouble."

Unto thy infinite mercies we recommend *him*, and to the compassionate kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, who we hope will hear all the prayers of *his* friends for *him*, every where, and send his

Holy Spirit to be *his* comforter, and his good angels to be *his* guardians, and direct those who are to advise and prescribe the means of *his* restoration, and bring *him* to praise thee again in the assemblies of thy saints upon earth; or (if thou hast otherwise disposed in thy wise counsels) to praise thee in the great assembly of saints and angels in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour, to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit, be all praise, love and obedience, world without end. *Amen.*

Prayer for the Grace of Patience, and a suitable Behaviour in a sick Person to Friends and Attendants.

HELP thy servant, O thou merciful Redeemer and lover of souls, to undergo this load of affliction, which thou hast laid upon *him*, with patience. "Lead *him*" gently by the hand to "the waters of comfort," and let "thy rod" and "thy staff support" *him*, now that *he* is obliged to "walk in the valley and shadow of death."

Let *him* consider thee, O blessed Jesus, in all thy weary pilgrimage and sufferings here upon earth, before thou enteredst into glory, "that *he* be not weary and faint in *his* mind."

If relief does not come from thee so soon as *he* expects or desires, enable *him* still to hold out with long-suffering, and to wait with patience for it. And whatsoever thou doest with *him*, O Lord, let *him* be "dumb, and not open *his* mouth" to murmur or repine, because it is "thy doing." Make *him* acquiesce and rest satisfied, even in the bitterest dispensations of thy providence; and let no pains or sufferings ever drive *him* from thee, considering that no "temptation hath befallen him" but "what is common to men."

And, together with this patience towards thee, give *him* patience, O merciful Lord, towards all those who kindly and charitably minister unto *him*, and attend about *him*.

Keep *him* from being humoursome, and showing crossness to their good counsels, or from being causelessly angry, and exceptious against their kind endeavours. If any evil accidents or indiscretions happen, let *him* not presently be outrageous to aggravate them, or break out into any reproachful or unseemly behaviour against them; but let *him* be pleased with the least expression of their kindness, and interpret every thing favourably; and on all occasions let *him* make it *his* study to oblige those who are obliging to *him* in this time of necessity, receiving with thankfulness their good offices, and praying God to reward them, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

A Prayer for spiritual Improvement by Sickness.

[From Dr. Inet.]

O MERCIFUL Father, who scourgest those whom thou lovest, and chastisest those whom thou wilt receive; let thy loving correction purify thy servant, and make *him* great in thy favour by *his* present humiliation. O let *him* learn "thy statutes" in this school of affliction:" let *him* "seek thee early" in it; and when *his* "heart is overwhelmed, lead *him* to the rock of salvation."

Let thy "rod" awaken *him* from *his* former security in sin, and let *him* sensibly find that thou "chastisest *him* for his profit, that *he* may be partaker of thy holiness."

Teach *him*, by this proof of thy fatherly correction, to be more dutiful for the time to come; to repent of *his* former offences, and to "redeem the time past," by a double diligence for the future, if thou shalt in mercy raise *him* up again. Let the remainder of *his* life be thine, and let nothing separate *him* from thy love and service, but let it be *his* whole care and study to provide oil for *his* lamp, and prepare for eternity; that so "all the days of *his* appointed time *he* may wait till *his* change come," and be ready whensoever *his* Lord shall call *him*. *Amen.*

For a sick Person who is about to make his Will.

O LORD, who puttest into our hearts good desires, and hast inclined thy servant to "set *his* house in order," as well in relation to *his* temporal, as *his* spiritual, concerns, grant that *he* may do it with exact justice, according to the rules of our own religion, and the dictates of right reason. *He* unfeignedly thanks thee for thy great mercies, in having so liberally provided for *him*, that *he* may be rather helpful than chargeable to any, and die a benefactor and not in debt.

We charitably hope, that what *he* is now about to dispose of, was all procured by fair and righteous dealings, that *he* may comfortably feel, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Let *him* be ready, with good Zaccheus, to make restitution in the best manner *he* is able, and to say with Samuel:

"Behold here I am: witness against me before the Lord; whose ox have I taken, or whose ass have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed, or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it."

Lord, give *him* strength to order all things in as due and regular a manner as if *he* were well. Let his memory be perfect, and *his* judgment sound, and *his* heart so rightly disposed, that *he* may do nothing amiss, or through partiality, but that justice and integrity may be seen through the whole conduct of *his* will.

[If rich, add this.]

Let the light of *his* charity likewise shine gloriously before men, that out of the abundance thou hast been pleased to bless *him* with, *he* may plentifully give to the poor and distressed, though no otherwise related to *him* but as they are members of Jesus Christ, and brethren and sisters of the same communion.

Let *him*, O let *him*, now O Lord, and at all times, if thou shouldest graciously continue *him* here any longer, make to "*himself* such friends of the unrighteous mammon, that when these fail, they may receive *him* into everlasting habitations." *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Penitent.

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

RIGHTEOUS art thou, O God, in all the pains and sorrows which punish our sins and try our patience, and we have none to accuse and complain of for the same but ourselves. This is the acknowledgment which thy servant makes, whom thou hast now afflicted. *He* receives it as the chastisement of a sinner, and is willing to bear chastisement for *his* sins, that *he* may thereby be reclaimed from them. Correct *him*, O Lord, that thou mayest not condemn *him;* and let *him* be

judged by thee for *his* sins, and judge *himself* for them here, that *he* may have nothing but mercy without judgment to receive at thine hands hereafter.

But judge *him*, O God, with mercy, and not in thine anger. Judge *him* not according as *his* sins have deserved, but according as *his* weakness can bear, and according as thy compassions are wont to mitigate thy judgments: and let *his* afflictions work in *him* a true repentance, "not to be repented of," and prove a happy means, in the hand of thy mercy, to reclaim *him* perfectly from all the errors into which *he* hath fallen; and to confer that rest and peace upon *his* soul, which is denied to *his* body; for our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

Thou smitest *him*, O gracious God, that thou mayest cure *him*; and punishest *his* sin, that thou mayest thereby amend and reclaim the sinner; and *he* is weary of *his* sins, which have brought upon *him* all these sorrows, and which, as *he* seems now deeply sensible, will bring infinitely worse, unless *he* prevent the same by *his* timely and sincere repentance.

Help *him*, therefore, to search them out; and when *he* sees them, let *him* not stop at any one, but steadfastly resolve to renounce and amend all: Let thy love make *him* hate every evil way, and render *his* purposes against them strong and resolute, and *his* care in fulfilling the same, vigilant and patient; and grant that the remainder of *his* days may be one continual amendment of *his* former errors, and dedication of *himself* to thy service. *He* desires life, only that *he* may serve thee; Lord, continue and confirm *him* in this purpose.

Lord cure *his* folly by *his* misery; and teach *him* by the loss of *his* ease, to purchase the blessing of true repentance, and the comfortable hopes of thy merciful acceptance thereof; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Person who intends to receive the blessed Sacrament.

O thou infinite and eternal Spirit, from whom every good motion of our hearts proceedeth! who both quickenest the dead, and after thou hast given life, givest the increase: increase, we beseech thee, the good seeds of thy grace, which thou hast sown in the heart of thy servant, by inclining *him* to receive the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord, in which thou art more immediately present, to illuminate the faithful, and to comfort and refresh all that are "weary and heavy-laden with their sins."

O, cause thy face thus comfortably to shine upon thy distressed servant, who now intends to draw near to thee in this sacrament, as thou hast commanded *him*.

Help *him*, in the mean time, O Lord, to fit and prepare *himself* for this holy communion: fill *his* soul with reverence and godly fear; with earnest desires and longings after divine life; with serious repentance for all *his* past offences, and hearty resolutions of living for ever after unto Jesus, who died for *him*. O, let *him* meditate upon his bleeding Saviour with a "broken and a contrite heart," which thou hast promised "not to despise:" forgive *him* all that is past, and give *him* grace for the future, to "live more soberly, righteously, and piously, in this present world," if it shall be thy good pleasure to continue *him* in it.

A Prayer for a sick Person that wants Sleep.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

Adored be thy love, thy wonderful love, O most gracious God, who hast so many ways expressed thy bounty towards us. Thy mercies in Christ Jesus surpass all our thoughts; we are not able to number all the other blessings thou hast bestowed upon us. How much do we owe thee for the quiet sleep of but one night! We see, in this thy poor afflicted servant how much we ought to thank thee for this single blessing, that our eyes, when we would close them, are not held waking.

Pardon, good Lord, our ingratitude for this and all the rest of thy undeserved mercies: and be pleased graciously also to visit *him*, who still languishes on *his* sick-bed, looking up to thee from whom cometh our help. Renew *his* wasted spirits with comfortable sleep; compose *him* to a sweet and undisturbed rest; refresh *him* thereby so sensibly, that *he* may be restored to such a degree of strength, as may make *him* able, in some measure, affectionately to acknowledge thy goodness, when thou hast dealt so bountifully with *him:* or if thou delayest to bestow that blessing on *him*, in the multitude of *his* thoughts within *him*, let thy comforts delight *his* soul. If *he* still continues without any rest, grant that *his* mind may rest and repose itself in the bosom of thy dearest love, and may feel the most sensible consolations from heaven, not only quieting, but greatly rejoicing *his* heart. Preserve the use of *his* understanding, and let the enemy have no advantage of *him;* but make *him* able to say, "I will wait patiently for the Lord, till he incline his ear unto me, and hear my cry.—O, hear *his* prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto his cry: O, spare *him*, that *he* may recover strength before *he* go hence;"* for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be said when the sick Person grows light-headed.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

O Lord, look down from heaven, in pity and compassion, upon this thine afflicted servant, who is not able now to look up to thee: the more sorrowful *his* condition grows, the fitter object *he* is of thine infinite mercies; who acceptest, we humbly hope, of the submission *he* made of *himself*, in the beginning of *his* sickness, to thine almighty wisdom and goodness. And therefore, since it is thy pleasure to suffer *his* distemper to proceed to this dangerous extremity, do thou no less graciously love *him*, and delight in *him*, than if *he* could still give up *himself* to thy blessed will.

And hear, O most merciful Father, our prayers in *his* behalf, when *he* can no longer commend *himself* to thy mercies. Pardon, good Lord, pardon all *his* sins; impute not to *him* any of *his* former follies; lay not to *his* charge *his* not improving, or misusing, *his* reason and understanding, which we earnestly, but humbly, entreat thee to restore to *him*, together with such a measure of thy divine grace, as may quicken and assist *him* to employ *his* thoughts to the best purposes, especially in meditating on thy mercies, in studying thy praise, and in exhorting all others to love thee, to trust in thee, and sincerely obey thee.

* Psalm xl. 1. and xxxix. 12, 13.

And while *he* remains thus deprived of *his* reason, be pleased to quiet and compose *his* spirits, or to prevent all furious motions there, or quickly to abate such violent passions, if any arise: for which end, be pleased to remove all frightful imaginations far from *him*, and suffer not the evil one to approach *him;* preserve *him* from doing any harm, either to *himself* or to any others. "Forsake *him* not, O Lord our God, be not far from *him*. Make haste to help *him*, O Lord our salvation."*

"So will we give thanks unto thee for ever."

"We will be still praising thee, and showing forth thy loving kindness to those who succeed us."

"That they may set their hope in thee our God, and not forget thy works, but keep thy commandments." *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person, when Danger is apprehended by excessive Sleep.

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

O MERCIFUL God, let not this deep sleep, which is fallen on thy servant, prove the sleep of death; make it the sleep of a recovering person, to relieve and revive *him:* and awake *him* out of it in thy due time, to offer thee praise, and to labour still among us in doing thee honour and service.

But if thou art pleased to take *him* to thyself, Lord, remember and accept of all *his* former prayers and repentance, faith and patience.

Look not upon *his* sins, but to pardon them; nor on *his* weaknesses, but to pity them: and when *he* awakes in the next world, let *him* find *himself* surrounded with light and bliss, instead of gloominess and sorrow, and awake to eternal life.

Lord, hear us for this thy weak servant in distress. Hear our prayers for *him*, who seems not able now to offer up any prayers to thee for *himself*. And accept both *him* and us to the blessed enjoyment of thy love through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person lying insensible on a Sick-bed.

O THOU Preserver of men, who knowest the frailty of our constitutions; how soon our senses may fail us, and our understanding depart from us; to what accidents, distempers, and decays, our weak nature is subject; even such as may make the most acute and judicious quickly become as fools; and the ablest and strongest, weak and insensible; O look down, we beseech thee, upon thy servant, who now lies in such a weak and insensible condition.

The less able *he* is to assist *himself*, the more need hath *he* of our prayers, and of thy tender mercy to *him*. O thou great Creator of the world, who broughtest light out of darkness, and madest all things out of nothing, and canst restore our dead bodies again after they are mouldered into dust, be pleased to repel the clouds of darkness which now have taken away the light of our *brother's* understanding, and rendered *him* a companion for the dead.

Quicken *him* again, O Lord, and restore *him* to *his* former senses, that *his* soul may bless and praise thy holy name.

Hear our petitions, O Lord, and receive our prayers for our *brother*, that this image of death may not be converted into death itself, but that *he* may live to proclaim thy power and to celebrate thy praises longer upon earth.

But if it be thy will to remove *him* hence in this insensible condition, O pardon, we beseech thee, all *his* offences, and accept of the preparation and repentance that *he* was able to make before the distemper prevailed upon *him* in so deadly a manner. Receive *him*, O Lord, into the arms of thy mercy, and accept *him*, for thy well-beloved Son's sake; that so this short night may quickly be turned into everlasting day; and, after these dark shadows are removed, *he* may find *himself* in a heaven of happiness, where, "in thy light *he* may see light" for ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer for One who hath been a notoriously wicked Liver.

O LORD God, of infinite goodness and compassion, whose mercies are over all thy works; who makest the sun to shine, and the rain to descend, upon the "unjust" as well as the "just," and art kind even to the most unthankful; we humbly beseech thee, to look down in mercy upon this thy unworthy servant, who hath so long "trampled upon the riches of thy goodness, not knowing that it should lead to repentance."

Let thy rod, therefore, awaken *him* now to a sense of *his* condition, whom thy goodness hath not reclaimed, and let *him* still find mercy at thy hands, notwithstanding his continual abuse of it.

Thou hast promised, O Lord, that, "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness which he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." O make good this thy promise to thy servant here, who stands in so much need of it.

"Hide thy face from *his* sins, and blot out all *his* iniquities:" though they be "red as scarlet," yet do thou make them "white as snow," by repentance, which we beg of thee to give *him*, and to accept, though late, through thine infinite mercies.

Simon Magus, though in the "gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity," was exhorted to repent, and to pray for pardon: and therefore we hope the gate of life is still open for our *brother*, though *he* hath so long shut *himself* out of it, by going on in a course that leadeth to the "chambers of death."

Blessed Lord, let thy terrors at length awaken *him* out of this lethargical condition, before *he* is overtaken by thy judgments. Afflict *him* here, that thou mayest spare *him* hereafter. Soften *his* heart, that *he* may bewail *his* ill-spent life, like Mary Magdalen, with tears of contrition.

O quicken *him* to a sense of *his* duty, and of *his* danger, before it be too late: and when thou hast brought *him* to *his* right mind, receive *him*, we beseech thee, as the compassionate father did his prodigal son, or the shepherd his lost sheep.

Thou, O Lord, who didst pardon the thief upon the cross, hear our prayers for our *brother*, in these *his* great, and, for any thing we know, *his* last agonies.

And as the fore-mentioned instances are lively significations of thine unbounded goodness, and were written for our comfort and instruction, that none should despair of pardon; so with the greatest confidence we now recommend this our distressed *brother* to thy divine protection, beseeching

* Psalm xxxviii. 21, 22.

thee to forgive all that is past, and to receive *him* at last into thine "everlasting habitation." *Amen.*

A Prayer for One who is hardened and impenitent.

Lord God Almighty, who art the "Father of our spirits," and who "turnest the hearts of men as thou pleasest; who hast mercy on whom thou wilt have mercy, and whom thou wilt thou hardenest; let thy merciful ears be open, we pray thee, to the supplications which we now offer to thy Divine Majesty, in the behalf of this thy servant, who appears insensible of *his* sin and folly, and on whom all means to lead *him* to repentance have hitherto seemed vain and ineffectual. Take from *him*, we humbly entreat thee, all ignorance and hardness of heart: remove from *him* all prejudice against, and contempt of, thy sacred word and ministry: let *him* no longer "make a mock of sin," but be sensible that the wisdom *he* has hitherto gloried in, is the greatest and most dangerous folly. Open thou *his* eyes, that *he* may "see the wonderful things of thy law." Show thy mercy upon *him*, and grant *him* thy salvation. Convince *him* of the vanity and madness, as well as danger, of *his* past ways.

His understanding, we fear, is now darkened, and *his* heart hardened through the deceitfulness of sin: O, do thou enlighten *his* dark mind, and let *him* at last see the beauties of holiness, which have so long been hidden from *his* eyes. Take from *him* this "stony heart, and give *him* a heart of flesh." Awaken *his* slumbering and inattentive soul, that it may delight in things agreeable to its nature, and be employed in things that make for its everlasting peace. O give *him* understanding, and *he* shall yet live. Thou that canst revive souls which are dead in sin and trespasses, and make even such as lie in the grave of corruption to become glorious saints and even martyrs for religion, hear our prayers for our *brother*, who seems to be on the brink of destruction; and pity poor sinners that have not pity on themselves.

It is the unhappiness of being long accustomed to sin, that we are not soon made sensible of our errors, nor easily made to know them. It is the pride of our nature to be unwilling to acknowledge our faults, and to confess our sins: but let thy grace, O God, teach us to deny this ungodly lust. Do thou humble in us all high and vain imaginations; suppress all proud thoughts and haughty opinions of ourselves. Give us all (and particularly thy servant, for whom we are now interceding) a sense of our own vileness; give us unfeigned repentance for all the errors of our life past; that, being cast down, thou mayest raise us up, and become merciful to us, miserable sinners.

Let us all find, by blessed experience, that "we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and that "his commandments" are not "grievous" to us, but rather the delight and desire of our souls; that so at last we may be presented to him "holy and unblameable, and unreprovable in his sight." *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Woman that is with Child.

O God, the help of all that put their trust in thee, the support of the weak, and the relief of the needy; look with pity upon this woman thy servant, who at best acknowledgeth herself but a weak and helpless creature, but much more so now in her present condition, when thou hast added weakness to weakness, and made her to travail with much sickness, together with the burden of child-bearing.

O Lord, be thou graciously pleased to proportion thy strength to her weakness, and as pains and sorrow take hold upon her, inspire her with fresh vigour and courage to rely upon thee, her only support in time of need, and the rock of her salvation.

Let her not be disquieted with the fear of any evil, since none can happen unto her without thy permission; but give her grace patiently to resign herself to thy blessed will in all things, who knowest what is best for her, and wilt lay no more upon her, we trust, than thou wilt enable her to bear.

Bring strength, O Lord, out of weakness, and health out of sickness; and make her, in thy good time, a joyful mother of a hopeful child, which may do good in its generation, and be an instrument of thy glory here, and a blessed inhabitant of thy heavenly kingdom hereafter. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Woman in the Time of her Travail.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

O most Mighty Lord, who hast given us innumerable pledges of thy love, and encouraged us to trust in thee for ever, and to expect with quiet and patient minds the issue of thy wise and good providence; we most humbly commend thy servant, in this her extremity, to thy care and blessing; beseeching thee to give her a gracious deliverance, and to ease her of the burden wherewith she labours. We ourselves are monuments of that mercy which we beg of thee. Thou didst preserve our weak and imperfect frame, before we were born. Thou hast succoured and supported us ever since, many times beyond our hopes, and always beyond our deservings. We commit ourselves, and every thing belonging unto us, most heartily unto thy hands; remembering that thou hast the same power and goodness still, by which we came into the light of the living. We cannot desire to be better provided for, than as thy infinite wisdom judgeth most convenient for us; unto that we refer ourselves, beseeching thee, if it be thy good pleasure, that her deliverance may be as speedy as her cries unto thee; or her patience as great and long as her pains. Thou who ripenest the fruits of the earth, and then givest us the gathering of them to our comfort, blast not, we beseech thee, the fruit of the womb; but bring it to maturity, and deliver it safe into thy servant's hand as a new pledge of thy goodness to her, to be an instrument of thy glory, and a future comfort and blessing to thy servant, who travails in so much pain with it now. Or if thou hast otherwise determined, Lord, give her grace to submit to thy holy will, and to rest satisfied in thy wise appointments, and never to distrust thy goodness and care over her. Hear us, O Father of mercies, and pardon hers and all our offences, and pity our infirmities: make us more thankful for what we have received, and more fit for the blessing which we now request; and prepare us for all thy future mercies, either in this life, or in the next, through thy infinite love and compassion declared to us, in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Woman who cannot be delivered without Difficulty and Hazard.

O Lord God of all comfort and consolation, who art the refuge of the distressed, and the help of all that depend upon thee; we thy unworthy servants do now offer up our supplications at the throne of thy majesty, in the behalf of this thy servant, who is in great pain and misery. Thou hast been pleased to bring the child to the birth, but there is not strength to bring forth. On this account, thy servant is in violent agonies, crying out in her pangs, and pouring out her soul to thee in prayer. O grant that "it may be in an acceptable time."

"Thou art our salvation; thou shalt preserve us from trouble; thou shalt compass us about with songs of deliverance." O let thy servant feel these blessed effects of thy goodness; and as thou hast brought to the birth, enable her, we beseech thee, to bring forth, that she may rejoice in the workmanship of thy hands, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Consider the low estate of thine handmaid, and deliver her soul from death, her eyes from tears, and her feet from falling. "Gracious art thou, O Lord, and righteous; thou preservest the simple, and helpest those that are in misery." Help thy servant therefore now, we humbly entreat thee, who stands in so much need of it. Accept her tears, and assuage her pain, as shall seem most expedient for her.—And forasmuch as she putteth her whole trust in thee, give her strength and patience proportionable to all her pains and agonies. Support her spirits under them, and, if thou pleasest, carry her safely through the same, and "make her to hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice."

"Restore unto her, O Lord, the joy of thy salvation, and uphold her with thy free Spirit; then shall she teach transgressors thy way, and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver her" from this great affliction, "O God, thou God of her salvation, and her tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness."

* Thy mercies and power are still the same, and will be the same for ever. O let them now be shown in this thy servant's delivery, as they have been formerly on the like occasion; that so, by having fresh instances of thy loving kindness, she may still praise thee more and more.

O perfect her repentance, and pardon her sins. Give her patience whilst she lives, and peace when she dies, and after death, the happiness of a blessed eternity, which thou hast promised and prepared for all that love and fear thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Grace and Assistance for a Woman after Delivery, but still in Danger.

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

O Father of mercies, what thanks can we worthily give unto thee for thine unspeakable goodness to this thy servant and her helpless infant, and for the wondrous things which thou hast done for her! The pangs of death compassed her, and she found trouble and sorrow. The mouth of the pit was opened, and ready to shut itself upon her: but thou hast graciously assuaged her pains, and turned her sorrows into joy.

Lord, we will ever adore and magnify thy mercy, which has dealt so lovingly with her, and praise thy truth and faithfulness, which have not suffered her hopes to fail. We will never forget how mindful thou hast been of the low estate of thy handmaid; for she has been supported by thy power, O blessed God, in her greatest weakness. She has tasted thy goodness in the midst of all her pangs and sorrows.

Perfect, O Lord, that deliverance to her which thou hast most graciously begun, and let her not be lost, after the wonders which thou hast already done for her.

Continue her patience, and her humble dependence on thee, under the pains and accidents to which she is still exposed. Support her spirits, and raise her up again in thy due time. Thy mercy and power are still the same, and will be the same for ever. O let them still be shown for her recovery, as they have been already for her delivery; let them be shown upon her, that she may praise thee more and more.

But if, in thy paternal providence, whereunto we pray she may willingly commit herself, thou hast determined otherwise concerning her, thy blessed will be done. Dispose her either to life or death, as thou pleasest, only in both to thy mercy: and whether living or dying, let her still please thee, and be thou her portion. O perfect her repentance, and give her patience whilst she lives, and peace when she dies, and after that, the happiness of a blessed eternity, which thou hast prepared for all that truly fear thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

If the Child be living, this may be added:

Preserve likewise her tender infant, O Father of mercies, and let its own weakness, and our cries, commend it to thy care.

Keep it also afterwards in health and safety, and as it increases in years and stature, let it increase in wisdom, and in thy fear. We beg not for it wealth or greatness, but wisdom to know and to serve thee. For, O Lord, we do not desire life, either for ourselves or it, but that we may live to thee, and grow daily in love and thankfulness for all thy mercies, and in faith and patience, and all holy obedience, which may fit us for the happiness which thou hast promised; through Jesus Christ our only Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

Prayers for a Sick Child.

[Visitation Office.]

O Almighty God and merciful Father, to whom alone belong the issues of life and death; look down from heaven, we humbly beseech thee, with the eyes of mercy upon this child, now lying upon the bed of sickness: visit *him*, O Lord, with thy salvation; deliver *him* in thy good appointed time from *his* bodily pain, and save *his* soul for thy mercy's sake; that if it shall be thy good pleasure to prolong *his* days here on earth, *he* may live to thee, and be an instrument of thy glory, by serving thee faithfully, and doing good in *his* generation; or else receive *him* into those heavenly habitations, where the souls of them that sleep in the Lord Jesus enjoy perpetual rest and

* This is to be omitted, if it be the first child.

felicity. Grant this, for thy mercy's sake; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

Lord, pity the troubles and weakness of this infant, and pity our sorrows, who are afflicted with it, and for it. Ease it of its pains, and strengthen it when it lies struggling for life. Raise it up again, if it shall please thee, to grow in years and stature, in wisdom and virtue; and thereby to comfort us, and glorify thee.

We believe, O Almighty Father, that thou knowest best what is fit, both for it and us, and wilt do what is fit for both, and therefore we leave it to thee, to dispose of it as thou pleasest. But whether it be to life or death, let it be thine in both, and either preserve it to be thy true and faithful servant here on earth, or take it to the blessedness of thy children in the kingdom of heaven; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person who, from a state of Health, is suddenly seized with the Symptoms of Death.

O most gracious Father, Lord of heaven and earth, Judge of the living and of the dead, behold thy servants turning to thee for pity and mercy, in behalf of ourselves and this thy servant. It was but lately that we beheld *him* in as promising a state of health and life, as any one of us seems to be in at present, and therefore our concern is so much the greater to behold so sudden a change, and so unlooked for an instance of our mortality.

We know, O Lord, thou canst bring back from the brink of the grave, and as suddenly raise thy servant again as thou hast cast *him* down, and therefore we think it not too late to implore thy mercy upon *him* for *his* recovery; at least we beg of thee to spare *him* a little, that he may recover *his* strength, and have time to make *his* peace with thee, "before *he* go hence, and be no more seen." But if it be thy will to remove *him* at this time into another world, O let the miracles of thy compassion, and thy wonderful mercy, supply to *him* the want of the usual measures of time, that *he* may fit *himself* for eternity. And let the greatness of *his* calamity be a means to procure *his* pardon for those defects and degrees of unreadiness which this sudden stroke hath caused. And teach us all, we beseech thee, from this unexpected fate of our *brother*, to be continually upon our guard, and to watch and pray, since we know not the hour when the "Master of the house cometh," whether "in the evening, or at midnight, or in the morning."

Lord, thou hast now called thy servant before *he* was aware of it; O, give *him* such a great and effectual repentance in this exigence, that in a short time it may be sufficient to do the work of many days. Thou regardest, O Lord, the sincerity of our hearts more than the measures of time, in our conversion; accept therefore, we beseech thee, the few minutes of thy servant's unfeigned tears and humiliation for *his* sins, as if they were hours and days of a longer preparation; and let it be thy pleasure to rescue *him* from all the evils *he* deserves, and all the evils *he* fears, that in the songs of eternity which angels and saints shall sing to the glory of thy name, this also may be reckoned amongst thine invaluable mercies, that thou hast redeemed *his* soul from death, and made *him* partaker of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Person, when there appeareth small hope of Recovery.

[Visitation Office.]

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need; we fly unto thee for succour in behalf of this thy servant, here lying under thy hand in great weakness of body. Look graciously upon *him*, O Lord, and, the more the outward man decayeth, strengthen *him*, we beseech thee, so much the more continually with thy grace and Holy Spirit in the inner man. Give *him* unfeigned repentance for all the errors of *his* life past, and steadfast faith in thy Son Jesus, that *his* sins may be forgiven, and his pardon sealed in heaven, before *he* go hence, and be no more seen. We know, O Lord, that there is no work impossible with thee, and that, if thou wilt, thou canst even yet raise *him* up, and grant *him* a longer continuance among us. Yet forasmuch as in all appearance the time of *his* dissolution draweth near, so fit and prepare *him*, we beseech thee, against the hour of death, that after *his* departure hence in peace, and in thy favour, *his* soul may be received into thine everlasting kingdom; through the mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son, our Saviour. *Amen.*

A general Prayer for Preparation and Readiness to die.

Lord, "what is our life, but a vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away?" Even at the longest, how short and transitory! and when we think ourselves most secure, yet we know not what a day may bring forth; nor how soon thou mayest come, before we are aware, to call us to our last account.

Quickly shall we be as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Quickly shall we be snatched away hence, and our place here shall know us no more.

Our bodies shall soon lie down in the grave, and our souls be summoned to appear before the tribunal of Christ, to receive our everlasting doom; and yet, O Lord, how do the generality of mankind live in this world, as if they were never to leave it! How unmindful are we all of our departure! how improvident of our time! how careless of our souls, and negligent in our preparations for eternity! so that thou mightest justly cut us off in the midst of our sins, and our unpreparedness to appear before thee. But, O God of all comfort and mercy, remember not our sins against thee, but remember thy own love to us in Jesus Christ, and thy tender mercies which have been ever of old. O, remember how short our time is, and "so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

In the days of our health and prosperity, let us, from the example of our *brother's* weakness, remember our own approaching fate; and let *him*, from the sudden change of health to sickness, consider how few and evil all *his* days have been, and that there is no satisfaction in any thing, but in knowing thee, O God. Lord, what have we to do in this world, but to devote ourselves wholly to thy service, and to make ready for the world to

come? O, that we may all of us be mindful of this "one thing necessary," that we may finish our "work," before we finish our course.

Quicken thy servant, O Lord, into a powerful and serious consideration of these things, now thou hast brought him into more intimate acquaintance with them. Instruct and assist him in this great work of preparation to die. Show *him* how to do it, and help *him* with good success to perform it; that when the time of *his* dissolution draweth near, *he* may have nothing else to do, but to resign *himself* willingly and cheerfully into thy hands, as into the hands of a merciful Creator, there to remain with thee for ever in that blessed place where sin and sickness and death shall be no more. *Amen.*

A commendatory Prayer for a sick Person at the point of Departure.

[Visitation Office.]

O Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of just men made perfect; we humbly commend the soul of this thy servant our dear *brother* into thy hands, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour; humbly beseeching thee, that it may be acceptable in thy sight. And teach us, who survive, by this and other daily instances of mortality, to see how frail and uncertain our own condition is, and so to number our days, that we may seriously apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom, which may bring us to life everlasting; through Jesus Christ thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

A Litany for a sick Person at the time of Departure.

[From Bishop Andrews.]

O God, the Father of heaven,
Have mercy upon *him:*
Keep and defend *him.*
O God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
Have mercy upon *him:*
Save and deliver *him.*
O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son,
Have mercy upon *him:*
Strengthen and comfort *him.*
O, holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity,
Have mercy upon *him.*

Remember not, Lord, *his* offences; call not to mind the offences of *his* forefathers; but spare *him,* good Lord, spare thy servant, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood, and be not angry with *him* for ever.

From thy wrath and indignation; from the fear of death; from the guilt and burden of *his* sins, and from the dreadful sentence of the last judgment;

Good Lord deliver *him.*

From the sting of conscience: from impatience, distrust, or despair; and from the extremity of sickness or agony, which may any ways withdraw *his* mind from thee;

Good Lord deliver *him.*

From the powers of darkness; from the illusions and assaults of our ghostly enemy; and from the bitter pangs of eternal death;

Good Lord deliver *him.*

From all danger and distress; from all terrors and torments; from all pains and punishments, both of the body and of the soul;

Good Lord deliver *him.*

By thy manifold and great mercies; by the manifold and great mercies of Jesus Christ thy Son; by his agony and bloody sweat; by his strong crying and tears; by his bitter cross and passion; by his resurrection and ascension; by his intercession and mediation; and by the graces and comforts of the Holy Ghost;

Good Lord deliver *him.*

In this time of extremity; in *his* last and greatest need; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment;

Good Lord deliver *him.*

We sinners do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God; that it may please thee to be *his* defender and keeper; to remember *him* with the favour thou bearest unto thy people, and to visit *him* with thy salvation:

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

That it may please thee to save and deliver *his* soul from the power of the enemy, to receive it to thy mercy, and to give *him* a quiet and joyful departure:

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

That it may please thee to be merciful, and to forgive all the sins and offences, which at any time of *his* life *he* hath committed against thee:

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

That it may please thee not to lay to *his* charge, what in the lust of the flesh, or in the lust of the eye, or in the pride of life, *he* hath committed against thee:

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

That it may please thee not to lay to *his* charge, what, in the fierceness of *his* wrath, or in vain and idle words, *he* hath committed against thee:

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

That it may please thee to make *him* partaker of all thy mercies, and promises, in Christ Jesus.

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

That it may please thee to grant *his* body rest and peace, and a part in the blessed resurrection of life and glory:

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

That it may please thee to vouchsafe *his* soul the enjoyment of everlasting happiness, with all the blessed saints in thy heavenly kingdom:

We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.

Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

Grant *him* thy peace.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

Have mercy upon *him.*

O Saviour of the world, &c.
Unto thy gracious, &c. } as follow, III.

Form of recommending the Soul to God, in her Departure from the Body.

[From Bishop Cosins.]

Into thy merciful hands, O Lord, we commend the soul of this thy servant, now departing from the body. Receive *him,* we humbly beseech thee, into the arms of thy mercy, into the glorious society of thy saints in heaven. *Amen.*

God the Father, who hath created thee; God the Son, who hath redeemed thee; God the Holy

Ghost, who hath infused his grace into thee; be now and evermore thy defence, assist thee in this thy last trial, and bring thee to everlasting life. *Amen.*

[From Bishop Taylor.]

I.

O Holy and most gracious Jesus, we humbly recommend the soul of thy servant into thy hands, thy most merciful hands: let thy blessed angels stand in ministry about thy servant, and protect *him* in *his* departure. *Amen.*

II.

Lord, receive the soul of this thy servant: enter not into judgment with *him;* spare *him* whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and deliver *him* from all evil and mischief, from the crafts and assaults of the devil, from the fear of death, and from everlasting condemnation. *Amen.*

III.

Lord, impute not unto *him* the follies of *his* youth, nor any of the errors of *his* life; but strengthen *him* in *his* agony, and carry *him* safely through the last distress. Let not *his* faith waver, nor *his* hope fail, nor *his* charity be diminished; let *him* die in peace, and rest in hope, and rise in glory. *Amen.*

O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed us; save and help this thy departing servant, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord. *Amen.*

Unto thy gracious mercy and protection we commit *him.* O Lord, bless *him,* and keep *him.* Make thy face to shine upon *him,* and be gracious unto *him.* Lift up thy countenance upon *him,* and give *him* peace, both now and evermore. *Amen.*

A consolatory Form of Devotion that may be used with the Friends or Relations of the Deceased.

"Sorrow not, brethren, for them which are asleep, even as others, who have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again; even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him."—1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.

"It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good unto him."—1 Sam. iii. 18.

"The righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—Isaiah lvii. 1.

"Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest.

"The honourable age is not that which standeth in length of days, nor that which is measured by number of years.

"But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age."—Wisd. iv. 7, 8, 9.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints."—Psalm cxvi. 15.

"Yea, blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours."—Rev. xiv. 13.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father which art in heaven: hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

"Lord, thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, thou art God from everlasting, and world without end.

Thou turnest man to destruction; again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men.

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, seeing that is past as a watch in the night.

As soon as thou scatterest them, they are even as a sleep, and fade away suddenly like the grass.

In the morning it is green, and groweth up; but in the evening it is cut down, dried up, and withered.

For we consume away in thy displeasure, and are afraid of thy wrathful indignation.

Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee, and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

For when thou art angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Turn thee again at last, and be gracious to thy servants.

Comfort *them* again, now after the time that thou hast afflicted *them, and for the present occasion,* wherein *they* suffer adversity.

O satisfy *them* with thy mercy, and that soon; so shall *they* rejoice, and be glad all the days of *their* life."

Most just art thou, O God, in all thy dealings with us, "our punishment is less than our iniquities deserve;" and therefore we desire to submit with all humility and patience to this dispensation of thy divine providence. Be pleased so to sanctify it to this family, that thy grace and mercy may more abundantly flow upon thy servants. Thy property it is to bring good out of evil; O turn that evil, which is now befallen this house, to the benefit of every one of us, that so we may be able to say, from happy experience, that "the house of mourning is better than the house of feasting," while the death of our *brother,* through thy blessing, shall conduce and minister to our spiritual advantage.

Let the sight of *his* change make us the more mindful of our own, and the sense of our loss make us cleave more steadfastly to thee, O God. Let the remembrance of *his* virtues make us follow his example, and the hope we have of *his* being blessed, cause us to "press," with the more earnestness, "towards the mark, for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus."

Thou knowest, O Lord, the weakness and frailty of our nature, and therefore we beseech thee to give thy servants, who are more nearly concerned in this visitation, a constant supply of thy good Spirit, to enable them to bear it with humility, patience, resignation, and submission to thy divine will, as becometh the Gospel of Jesus Christ. O that no repining thoughts may arise in their hearts to discompose their duty towards thee, or towards their neighbour: but help

them rather to think wherein they have offended thee, and carefully to amend it: to place their affections more steadfastly on those immoveable things which are above, and freely resign all their thoughts and desires unto thee; saying, with holy Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." And let the death of thy servant strike us all with such a lively sense of our mortality, as may cause us so thoroughly to die to sin, and live to grace, that when we die, we may rest in him, as our hope is this our *brother* doth.

We evidently see "that death is the end of all men;" grant us therefore grace to lay it to heart, to despise the world, "to abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good; to delight in thy word, to study thy will, to observe thy law, and to take all possible care to promote thy honour, and our own salvation; that when "we go the way of all earth, we may be comforted by thy presence," and admitted into thy heavenly kingdom. *Amen.*

Assist us mercifully, O Lord, in these our supplications and prayers, and dispose the way of thy servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; that, among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Lord bless us and keep us, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us, and give us peace, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONS FOR THE SICK AND UNFORTUNATE IN EXTRAORDINARY CASES.

A Prayer for a Person whose Illness is chiefly brought on him *by some calamitous Disaster or loss, as of Estate, Relations, or Friends, &c.*

[From Bishop Patrick.]

O most gracious and glorious God, supreme Judge and Governor of the world, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being," and from whom all the blessings we enjoy, and "every good and perfect gift cometh," grant us, we humbly beseech thee, such a measure of thy grace, that whenever thou art pleased to remove any of thy blessings from us, we may bear it with a perfect resignation to thy divine will; and with all patience, humility, and contentedness of spirit, consider how unworthy we are of the least of thy mercies.

More particularly, O Lord, we beseech thee to give this peaceableness, and contentedness of mind, to this thy servant, whom thou hast so sensibly afflicted, by taking so near and dear a blessing from *him*. O give *him* such a portion of thy blessed Spirit, and such a lively sense of *his* duty, that *he* may have power to surmount all the difficulties *he* labours under, and freely to resign all *his* thoughts and desires unto thee, submitting *himself* entirely to thy good providence, and resolving, by thy gracious assistance, to rest contented with whatsoever thou in thy wisdom appointest for *him*. Thou knowest, O Lord, the weakness and frailty of our nature, and therefore be pleased to comfort *him* in this bed of sickness: establish *him* with the light of thy countenance: and grant that no repining thoughts may increase *his* illness, or discompose *his* duty towards thee, or *his* neighbour: but enable *him* to think wherein *he* hath offended thee, and carefully to amend *his* errors; to set *his* affections on things above, and not on things below, and to lay up for *himself* treasures in heaven, even the treasures of a good life, which no disasters or calamities shall ever be able to take from *him*. Grant this, O heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person who by any calamitous Disaster hath broken any of his *Bones, or is very much bruised and hurt in* his *Body.*

[From Mr. Jenks.]

O Lord, the only disposer of all events, thou hast taught us that "affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground:" but that the disasters which befall us are by thy appointment. Thou art just in all thou bringest upon us: and though thy "judgments are far above out of our sight," yet we know "that they are right, and that it is in very faithfulness thou causest us to be afflicted." "Why then should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Let these considerations prevail with thy servant to submit to thy dispensations. Make *him* resolve to bear the effects of thy displeasure, and to consider it as the just desert of *his* sins. O Lord, give *him* patience and strength, and grace, proportionable to this great trial; and enable *him* so to conduct *himself* under it, that, after the affliction is removed, *he* may find cause to say, "it was good for *him* to be afflicted." Thou that hast torn and smitten, thou art able to heal and to comfort. Be pleased to remember *him* in this *his* low estate. Cause *him* to "search and try *his* ways, and turn to thee, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

We know, O Lord, thou canst raise *him* up from the deepest affliction: O, let it be thy gracious will to glorify thy power and mercy in *his* recovery; or, however thou shalt think fit to dispose of this "vile body," grant *him*, O God, a mind entirely resigned to thy will, and satisfied with thy dispensations. O, make this calamity the messenger of thy love to *his* soul, and the happy means of *his* conversion; through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person that is afflicted with grievous Pains of his *Body.*

[From Mr. Jenks.]

O Lord, thou art a merciful God, and dost not willingly afflict the children of men; but when necessity requires, thou chastisest us for our profit, that we may be partakers of thy holiness. Remove, we beseech thee, this affliction from thy servant, or enable *him* to bear what thou art pleased to lay upon *him*. Lord, all *his* desire is before thee, and *his* groaning is not hid from thee. Regard *his* affliction, when thou hearest *his* cry. Enter not into judgment with *him*, nor deal with *him* according to *his* sins, but according to thy mercy in Jesus Christ. O gracious Father, sanctify to *him* what thou hast laid upon *him*, that *his* present affliction may work out for *him* an eternal weight of glory. Support *him* under

his pains, till it shall please thee to grant *him* ease and comfort. And, however thou shalt deal with *him*, let *him* not repine at thy correction, nor sin in charging thee foolishly. Make *him* sensible, that thou doest nothing but what is wise and just; nothing but what thy servant shall one day have cause to bless and praise thee for doing. And let this consideration teach *him* to glorify thee in the time of *his* visitation, by an humble submission to thy will, and a sincere reformation under thy providential dispensations; that thou mayest visit *him* in mercy and love, show *him* the joy of thy salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for One who is troubled with acute Pains of the Gout, Stone, Colic, or any other bodily Distemper.

[From Mr. Spinkes.]

O BLESSED God, just and holy, who dost not willingly afflict the children of men; withhold not, we beseech thee, thy assistance from this thy servant in the extremity of *his* pain. *His* sorrows are increased, and *his* soul is full of trouble. *He* has none to flee unto, for the ease and mitigation of *his* agonies, but to thee, O Lord. *He* freely owns that *his* sufferings are infinitely less than *he* has deserved; yet since they pierce deep, and are become almost too heavy for *him* to bear, we presume to call upon thee for aid; and to entreat thee, not to punish *him* according to *his* deserts. For if thou shouldest be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it?" Spare *him* therefore for thy mercy's sake; and correct *him* "not in thine anger, lest thou bring *him* to nothing." Endue *him* with that patience which may enable *him* cheerfully to submit to thy chastisement; and grant *him* an unfeigned repentance for all *his* sins. Comfort *his* soul, which melteth away for very heaviness, and let thy loving mercy come unto *him*. Sanctify this thy fatherly correction to *him*, that it may be for thy glory, and *his* advantage. And when thy gracious ends in afflicting *him*, shall be accomplished, which we know are not for "thy pleasure," but for *his* profit, give *him*, we beseech thee, a fresh occasion to rejoice in thy saving health; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person in the Small-Pox, or any such-like raging infectious Disease.

O GRACIOUS and merciful Father, the only giver of health, look down, we beseech thee, with an eye of compassion, upon thy miserable and disconsolate servant, from whom thou hast taken this great and valuable blessing; and instead of it, has filled every part of *his* body with a sore disease.

Teach *him*, O Lord, and teach us all from hence, to consider how soon the beauty of life is blasted like a flower, and our "strength dried up like a potsherd," that we may not put our trust in any of these transitory things, but in thee only, the living God, who art able to save and to destroy, to kill and to make alive.

Our *brother*, whom we now behold a spectacle of misery, was lately, like one of us, in perfect health. But now "thou makest *his* beauty to consume away, as it were a moth fretting a garment. Thine arrows stick fast in *him*, and thy hand presseth *him* sore; so that there is no soundness in *his* flesh, because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in *his* bones by reason of *his* sin.

"O reject *him* not utterly, but take thy plague away from *him*. Return, O Lord, and that speedily; for *his* spirit faileth. O leave *him* not in *his* distress; for though the world may forsake *him*, *his* sure trust is in thee. To thee, O Lord, does *he* cry; to thee doth *he* stretch forth *his* hands; *his* soul thirsteth after thee as a barren and dry land. Lord, all *his* desire is before thee, and *his* groaning is not hid from thee. Comfort *him* therefore again now after the time that thou hast afflicted *him*, and for the days wherein *he* hath suffered adversity."

Put a stop, O Lord, we beseech thee, to this raging infection, and say to the destroying angel, "It is enough." Protect us under the shadow of thy wings, that we may not "be afraid of any terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noonday;" but that, with ease in our minds, and health in our bodies, we may serve thee cheerfully all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person in a Consumption, or any lingering Disease.

[From Mr. Jenks.]

O MERCIFUL God, thou hast long kept thy servant under thy chastening hand; thou hast made *him* acquainted with grief; and *his* sickness is even become *his* familiar companion: yet, O blessed Lord, grant that *he* may not be impatient under thy chastisement, who art pleased to wait so long for the return of a sinner: but let *him* remember that thou hast kind intentions, even in thy bitterest dispensations; that thou "chastenest *him* whom thou lovest, and scourgest every son whom thou receivest." Teach *him*, O gracious Father, to see love in thy rod, and justice in all thy dealings; that *he* may humble *himself* under thy mighty hand; that *he* may think it good for *him* to have been afflicted, and patiently wait for thy loving kindness.

Yet, that *his* faith may not fail, nor *his* patience be overcome, give *him* ease and relaxation from *his* pain, and a happy conclusion of this long visitation. In the mean time, grant that *he* may neither despise thy chastening, nor faint under thy rebukes; but employ the time which thou lendest, and improve the affliction which thou continuest, as a gracious opportunity for *his* spiritual advantage; that under the decays of the body, the inner man may be renewed day by day; and that whatever appertains to *his* everlasting salvation may be promoted and perfected through the riches of thy grace, and the multitude of thy mercies in Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person who is lame in his *Sickness.*

[From Mr. Lewis.]

O ALMIGHTY God, who "art eyes to the blind and feet to the lame," have pity, we entreat thee, on thy servant: help *him* in *his* distress, and bless, we pray thee, the means made use of for *his* cure. Make *him* sensible of thy design in visiting *him* with this affliction; cause *him* to remember, how

in *his* strength and health, *he* followed *his* own devices, and the desire of *his* own heart; and let *him* see, that thou hast lifted up thy hand against *him*, for this very purpose, that *he* may learn to walk more humbly with thee, and turn *his* feet to thy testimonies. Deliver *him* from the painful confinement under which *he* labours, and grant *him* again the happiness of enjoying the comforts of life, and of worshiping thee in thy sanctuary, with the "voice of joy and praise." But, O Lord, not our will, but thine be done. Thou knowest better what is good for us, than we ourselves; and it is in wisdom that thou afflictest us. Give thy servant patience, that *he* may bear *his* pains without murmuring, and wait at the time of *his* deliverance from them without uneasiness; satisfy *him* of thy care over *him*, and thy tender regard to *him*; and in thy good time restore *him* to *his* former strength and vigour, that *he* may give thanks to thee in the great congregation; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for One that is Bed-ridden.

[From Mr. Lewis.]

O Lord our God, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, have compassion, we entreat thee, on the helpless condition of thy servant: support *his* spirits which are ready to droop under affliction: refresh *his* mind which is apt to be uneasy and melancholy at the thought of perpetual confinement. Give sleep to *his* eyes, and rest to his weary thoughts. Cause *him* to meditate on thee in the night watches; to "commune with *his* own heart;" and, in *his* solitude, "to search and try *his* ways," that *he* may see wherein *he* hath erred, and may turn unto thee with all *his* soul and with all *his* strength. Let this affliction be the means of preparing *him* for the enjoyment of thy presence, in which is fulness of joy; and let *him* be the more patient under it for that reason. Make *him* thankful that thou hast by this expedient preserved *him* from the company of those whose evil communication might have corrupted *his* heart, and hast taken *him* out of a world, by the snares and temptations of which *he* might have been prevailed upon to forsake thee, and turn from the way of thy commandments. Grant, O Lord, that *he* may not render *himself* unworthy of thy favour, by murmuring and repining; but that *he* may use the leisure and opportunity now given *him*, to make *his* peace with thee, and be fitted for the enjoyment of an inheritance among the saints in light; through thy mercy in Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person troubled in Mind, or in Conscience.

[Visitation Office.]

O blessed Lord, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comforts, we beseech thee, look down in pity and compassion upon this thine afflicted servant. Thou writest bitter things against *him*, and makest *him* to possess *his* former iniquities: thy wrath lieth hard upon *him*, and *his* soul is full of trouble. But, O merciful God, who hast given us thy holy word for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope; give *him* a right understanding of *himself*, and of thy threatenings and promises; that *he* may neither cast away *his* confidence in thee, nor place it any where but in thee. Give *him* strength against all temptations, and heal all *his* infirmities. Break not the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Shut not up thy tender mercies in displeasure, but make *him* hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Deliver *him* from the fear of the enemy; lift up the light of thy countenance upon *him*, and give *him* peace, through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Another for the same, or for One under deep Melancholy and Dejection of Spirit.

[From Mr. Jenks.]

O most gracious Lord, thou knowest our frame, and art full of compassion to thy servants under their trouble and oppression; look down upon us, we humbly beseech thee, with thy wonted pity, and remember the work of thy hands, our disconsolate *brother*. Thy wrath lies hard upon *him;* and all thy waves are gone over *him;* thy terrors oppress *his* mind, and disturb *his* reason. O thou that speakest the winds and waves into obedience and calmness, settle and quiet *his* discomposed thoughts; speak peace and satisfaction to *his* troubled mind, and give *him* comfort and sure confidence in the sense of thy pardon and love. Lord, help *his* unbelief, and increase *his* faith. Though *he* walk in the valley and shadow of death, let "thy rod and thy staff support and protect *him*." In the multitude of the thoughts and sorrows that *he* hath in *his* heart, let thy comfort refresh *his* soul. Let in a beam of thy heavenly light, to dispel the clouds and darkness in which *his* mind is involved. O direct to the means most proper for *his* help, and so bless and prosper them, that they may effectually promote *his* recovery out of this deplorable state. Incline *his* ears to wholesome counsels, and dispose *his* heart to receive due impressions. O gracious Father, pity *his* frailty, forgive *his* sin, and rebuke *his* distemper, that *his* disquieted soul may return to its rest. O, raise *him* up, and show thy mercy upon *him*, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

For the same.

[From Bishop Patrick.]

Preserve this thy servant, O gracious Father, from dishonouring thee and *his* religion, by distrusting thy power, or thy goodness.

Remove all troublesome imaginations from *him*, and give *him* a clear understanding of thee, and of *himself*, that no causeless fears and jealousies may overwhelm *him*, nor *his* heart sink within *him* from any sadness and dejection of spirit. Compose, we beseech thee, *his* disturbed thoughts; quiet *his* disordered mind, and appease all the tumults of *his* soul, by a sweet sense of thy tender mercies, and of the love of thy Son Jesus Christ to mankind. Keep *him* from forming any rash conclusions concerning thy providence; and give *him* so much light and judgment amid all the darkness and confusion of *his* thoughts, that *he* may not think *himself* forsaken by thee; but may firmly believe, that if *he* does the best *he* can, thou requirest no more. And enable *him*, O Lord, to look forwards to that region of light and glory,

whither our Saviour is gone before, to prepare a place for all thy faithful servants.

Strengthen *his* weak and feeble endeavours. Support *his* fainting spirit, and cause it humbly to hope in thee. Confirm and establish every good thought, desire, and purpose, which thou hast wrought in *him*. Make *him* to grow in wisdom, faith, love, and willing obedience. Conduct *him* hereafter so easily and steadily, peaceably and quietly, so cheerfully and securely, in thy ways, that *he* may glorify thee whilst *he* lives, and when *he* leaves this troublesome world, may resign *his* soul into thy merciful hands, with a pious confidence and a hope of a joyful resurrection; through the merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for One under Fears and Doubts concerning his *spiritual Condition, or under perplexing Thoughts and Scruples about* his *Duty.*

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

O LORD our God, we offer up our humble supplication to thee in behalf of this thy servant, whose soul is disquieted within *him* by *his* fears and anxiety respecting the safety of *his* condition. Remove from *him*, we entreat thee, all frightful apprehensions, all perplexing doubts and scruples about *his* duty. Make *him* satisfied and settled in a right understanding of all thy precepts, and careful in the observance of them; and dispel, by the light of thy countenance, all that darkness which obscures *his* soul, that *he* may not be unnecessarily dejected, and distrustful of *himself*, or dishonourably jealous of thee. Deliver *him* from all those offences which make *him* so much a stranger to peace and comfort; and cause *him* to place *his* chief satisfaction and delight in obeying thy commandments, and in meditating on thy mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Prayer for One who is disturbed with wicked and blasphemous Thoughts.

[From Mr. Lewis.]

O LORD GOD, the Father of our spirits, to whom all hearts are open, and all desires known; we humbly entreat thee to succour and relieve this thy servant, who labours under the burden of wicked thoughts. Let thy power and goodness be shown in healing *his* disordered mind. Cleanse the thoughts of *his* heart by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit. Suffer them not to be defiled by any profane or blasphemous suggestions, but heal the soul of thy servant, by enabling *him* to stifle and suppress all such thoughts as tend to rob *him* of *his* peace, or deprive *him* of the comforts of religion. Enable *him* to be of an equal and steady temper, to be mild and gentle in *his* behaviour, and to keep *his* hopes and fears within due bounds. Make *him* sensible of the wise and kind reasons of these afflictions; that, if they are duly improved, they may be powerful preservatives of *his* soul against the prevailing sins of a licentious age; may lessen *his* inclinations to the enjoyments of this life, and deaden *his* appetite to sensual pleasure, and the perishing goods of this world; that these afflictions may dispose *him* to compassionate the sufferings of others, and make *him* more thoroughly feel *his* own infirmities, and the want of divine assistance. Open *his* eyes, that *he* may see and know the wise and gracious dispensations of thy providence; and, by humbling *himself* under them, may at length be lifted up and made a partaker of that peace and joy which thou bestowest on all thy faithful servants. Grant this, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer.

A Prayer for One who is afflicted with a profane Mistrust of Divine Truths, and blasphemous Thoughts.

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

O MOST gracious God, in whose hand is the soul of every living creature; protect this thy servant, we humbly and earnestly entreat thee, against all doubts and mistrusts of thy truth, against all irreligious thoughts and suggestions.

Never suffer them, O Lord, to weaken *his* faith, or to hinder *him* from performing *his* duty. Preserve *him* not only from the sin, but if it seem good to thine infinite wisdom, from the temptation and the sorrow, which may attend them.

But, if it be thy blessed will to continue these terrifying thoughts for *his* trial and humiliation, Lord, make *him* sensible that they will not be imputed to *him* as sin, if, as soon as *he* perceives them, *he* rejects them with horror and indignation.

During this trial, let *him* learn to depend upon thee, that, as often as these profane thoughts arise in *his* mind, *he* may find grace to overcome them, and without the least indulgence or delay to cast them out; and that *he* may learn to show patience under them, as under every other affliction and trial of thy appointment, trusting to thy grace to assist *him*, and to thy goodness to deliver *him*; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for One under the dread of God's Wrath and everlasting Damnation.

[From Mr. Lewis.]

O ALMIGHTY God, the aid of all that need, and the helper of all that flee to thee for succour, accept, we beseech thee, our humble supplications for this thy servant, labouring under the dismal apprehensions of thy wrath.

O Lord, enter not into judgment with *him*; make *him* sensible that, though the wages of sin are death, the gift of God is eternal life; that thou hatest the death of a sinner, and art not willing that any should perish; that thou always punishest less than we deserve, and in the midst of judgment rememberest mercy. Revive *his* soul with a sense of thy love, and the hopes of obtaining thy pardon, and the joy of thy salvation; that *he* may be raised from this dejection, and show with gladness what thou hast done for *his* soul. All this we humbly beg for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Lunatic.

[From Mr. Jenks.]

O LORD, the only wise God, from whom we have received all the faculties of our souls: thou art holy and righteous in all thy dispensations, though the reason of them is frequently unknown to us. Dispel, we humbly beseech thee, if it be agreeable to thine infinite wisdom, the clouds in which the soul of thy servant is now involved; that *he* may regain *his* understanding, and the right use of *his* faculties. Heal *his* disordered mind: settle and quiet *his* passions; pacify and compose *his* imagination.

O prosper the means which are used for *his* recovery. Make *him* tractable in the use of remedies, and willing to comply with the advice of *his* friends. But if no means can effect *his* cure, let *him* possess *his* soul in peace and composure, and in every interval of reason address *his* prayer to thee; that, when *his* earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, *he* may rejoice in *his* former inability to pursue the pleasures of the world, and be presented unto thee pure and undefiled, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for natural Fools, or Madmen.

[From Mr. Kettlewell.]

O ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, pity, we entreat thee, this thy unhappy creature, who knows not *his* own wants, nor how to ask for thy mercies. Compassionate, O Lord, *his* infirmities, and supply *his* necessities. Let thy wisdom prevent those evils which *he* cannot foresee, or wants understanding to remove; but especially keep *him* from doing any thing that may be hurtful either to *himself* or others.

Let *his* mind, on all occasions, be quiet and peaceable; and as far as *his* faculties extend, exercised in piety and devout meditations. O hear our cry when we call upon thee: hear us for *him* who is not able to pray for *himself;* grant *him* thy fatherly care at present, and thy peace at the last; through the mediation of thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

PROPER PSALMS FOR A SICK PERSON AT SEA.

I.

1. SAVE me, O God, for the waters are come in, even unto my soul.

2. I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.—Psalm lxix. 1, 2.

3. The floods are risen, O Lord, the floods have lift up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

4. The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly: but yet the Lord, who dwelleth in heaven, is mightier.—Psalm xciii. 4, 5.

5. He maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still.

6. Wherefore unto thee, O Lord, do I cry in my trouble: deliver me out of my distress.—Psalm cvii. 28.

7. Thou shalt show us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation: thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea.—Psalm lxv. 5.

8. Through thee have I been holden up ever since I was born; thou art he that took me out of my mother's womb; my praise shall always be of thee.—Psalm lxxi. 5, 6.

9. I will cry unto thee, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.—Psalm lxxxix. 26.

10. Withdraw not thou thy mercy from me, O Lord; let thy loving-kindness and truth always preserve me.

11. For innumerable troubles are come about me: my sins have taken such hold upon me, that I am not able to look up; yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart hath failed me.

12. O Lord, let it be thy pleasure to deliver me, make haste, O Lord, to help me.—Psalm xl. 11, 12, 13.

II.

1. OUT of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.

2. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint.—Psalm cxxx. 1, 2.

3. For I am helpless and poor, and my heart is wounded within me.—Psalm cix. 21.

4. My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me.

5. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.—Psalm lv. 4, 5.

6. I go hence like the shadow that departeth, and am driven away like a grasshopper.—Psalm cix. 22.

7. O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from thee.—Psalm lxix. 5.

8. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit; in a place of darkness, and in the deep.

9. Thine indignation lieth hard upon me, and thou hast vexed me with all thy storms.—Psalm lxxxviii. 5, 6.

10. Thou breakest me with a tempest, and my roarings are poured out like waters.—Job iii. 24; ix. 17.

11. O reject me not utterly, and be not exceeding wroth against thy servant.—Lament. v. 22.

12. For my soul is full of trouble, and my life draweth nigh unto hell.—Psalm lxxxviii. 2.

13. I am brought into so great trouble and misery, that I go mourning all the day long.

14. For my loins are filled with a sore disease, and there is no whole part in my body.—Psalm xxxviii. 6, 7.

15. My wounds stink and are corrupt, through my foolishness.—Psalm xxxviii. 5.

16. Behold, O Lord, I am in distress; my bowels are troubled, my heart is turned within me, for I have grievously transgressed.—Lament. i. 20.

17. O remember not the sins and offences of my youth; but according to thy mercy think thou upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness.—Psalm xxv. 6.

18. Cast me not away in the time of age; forsake me not, when my strength faileth me.—Psalm lxxi. 8.

19. Take thy plague away from me: I am even consumed by the means of thy heavy hand.

20. When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment: every man therefore is but vanity.

21. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with thine ears consider my calling; hold not thy peace at my tears.

22. For I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

23. O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen.—Psalm xxxix. 11—13.

A Prayer for a sick Seaman.

O MOST great and glorious Lord, the "salvation of all that dwell on the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea;" under whose powerful protection we are alike secure in every place, and without whose providence over us we can no where be in safety; look down, we beseech thee, upon us, thy unworthy servants, who are called to "behold thy wonders in the deep," and to perform our several duties in the great waters.

"Thou art our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; and therefore we fly unto thee for succour in all our necessities. Extend thy accustomed goodness to our distressed brother, whom thou hast been pleased to visit with the rod of affliction.

"The waves of death encompass him about, and the sorrows of hell take hold upon him."

O leave him not to himself, nor let him be given over "to a spirit of slumber" and darkness; but "open his eyes, that he may see the wondrous things of thy law," and the necessity of a speedy and sincere repentance; so that from the sickness of his body, he may derive health and salvation to his soul, which is the great end of all thy righteous judgments, and of all our afflictions.

Let him seriously consider and reflect within himself, from this visitation, "what a dreadful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God;" and let him hence learn, if it shall please thee to raise him up again, to preserve a more awful sense of thy divine majesty upon his spirit, "and to live more soberly, righteously, and piously, in this present world."

We know, O Lord, that "many are the enemies of peace," and that "the whole world lieth in wickedness:" but let him not "follow a multitude to do evil," nor "give his consent to the enticement of sinners;" but being perfectly "redeemed from all vain conversation, and renewed in the spirit of his mind," let him "walk before thee with a perfect heart," and spend the residue of his days in thy faith and fear.

Or if thou hast determined otherwise concerning him, be pleased to give him sufficient grace, and strength, and time, to "make his calling and election sure, before he go hence and be no more seen:" revive his drooping spirits, fortify his heart, and as he decays in the outer, strengthen him in the inner man, by setting before him the hopes of a blessed immortality "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Soldier or Seaman.

O most mighty Lord, the fountain of health and life, strength and courage, the aid and support of all that fly unto thee for succour, with whom is no respect of persons, but every one that feareth thee (whether he be rich or poor, learned or unlearned) is accepted by thee; we beseech thee mercifully to look down upon our brother, who is now fallen under the rod of thy displeasure.

We know, O Lord, that all thy judgments are principally intended for our good in the end, by the reformation of our lives and manners: and therefore we most humbly beseech thee to let thy present judgment have that good effect upon our brother, that he may lead the rest of his life as a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ, and not continue to harden his heart against all the powerful and repeated instances of thy mercies and judgments towards him.

If thou hast designed this sickness shall terminate in his death, O be pleased to fit and prepare him for it; or if otherwise in mercy thou hast determined to spare him, O let him not return to any of his former sinful courses, but let him always keep in mind the promise which he made to thee in baptism, of renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil; and which, we hope, he now again heartily renews in this his day of visitation.

We know, O Lord, that many temptations will unavoidably assault him in the state of life wherein he is engaged, and therefore we most humbly beseech thee to give him such a portion of thy blessed Spirit, as may enable him to fight with as much resolution and courage against his spiritual enemies, as the nature of his post obliges him to do, upon just occasions, against his temporal; ever remembering, that the greatest of conquests is that which is made upon ourselves; and that no victory is so truly honourable, as that which is obtained over our vicious inclinations.

Wherefore give him grace, we beseech thee, O Lord, "to abhor that which is evil, and to cleave to that which is good." Let him religiously avoid all blasphemy and profaneness, all drunkenness, riot, and lasciviousness; and let him carefully follow the rule our Saviour hath set him, "of doing violence to no man, accusing no man falsely, and being content with his own wages;" so that, having "put on the whole armour of God, he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil; and whenever thou shalt be pleased to put an end to his warfare, (either now or hereafter,) he may cheerfully resign his soul into thy hands, in these comfortable words of the apostle: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give unto all those that love and fear him, and put their trust in his mercy." *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by a Person afflicted with a Distemper of long Continuance.

[By Dr. Stonehouse.]

O Lord God Almighty, I am wonderfully made, and all my powers of body and mind were produced and are supported by thee. "Thou killest, and makest alive: thou woundest, and makest whole."

I own and reverence thine hand in my present affliction. I acknowledge that thou art righteous in all that befalls me; for I have sinned; and thou chastenest me less than my iniquities deserve. In punishment thou showest mercy, continuest to me many comforts, prolongest my opportunities of reflection and amendment, and givest hope of that pardon which I so much want, and at this time earnestly entreat.

I desire in this poor condition of my health, to search and try my ways, and turn unto thee, O Lord, by deep humility, sincere repentance, and faith in the great Redeemer: and may the fruit of this and every affliction be to take away sin, and make my heart better.

O God, if it be thy merciful will, direct me to, and prosper, some means for the removal of my disorder, that I may yet be capable of glorifying thee in my station, and, by farther endeavours for thy service upon earth, be fitter for immortality.

Support me, gracious Lord, that my soul may not be quite cast down, and too much disquieted within me. Assist me to cherish penitent, believing, serious thoughts and affections. Grant me such resignation to thy will, such patience and meekness towards men, as my Divine Master requireth, and as he himself manifested while he was a sufferer on earth. Forgive all the harshness and sinfulness of my temper, and keep it from increasing upon me. May I learn from what I now feel to pity all who are sick, in pain, or

otherwise afflicted, and do all in my power to assist and relieve them.

If by this affliction thou intendest to bring me down to the grave, prepare me, by thy grace, for my removal hence, and entrance on the unseen eternal state: and may all the sufferings of the present life work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I am thankful for any degree of ease and comfort which I have this day enjoyed. Grant me, this night, such refreshing rest, that I may be better able to discharge the duties and bear the burden of another day, if thou art pleased to indulge me with it. If my eyes are kept waking, may my meditations be comfortable and useful to me.

Pity my weakness, merciful and heavenly Father, and hear my imperfect petitions, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who was once a man of sorrow, and is still touched with the feeling of our infirmities; to whom, as our merciful High Priest and powerful Intercessor, be glory for evermore. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used on the Death of a Friend.

[By Mr. Merrick.]

O Almighty God, who dost not willingly grieve the children of men, but in thy visitations rememberest mercy, teach me by thy grace to bear the loss of that dear person whom thou hast taken from me with patience and resignation, and to make a right use of the affliction which thy fatherly hand hath laid upon me. Thou hast given, and thou hast taken away: blessed be thy holy name. Make me thankful, O Lord, for the comforts and blessings which I still enjoy; and sanctify to my soul all the sufferings, which in the course of this mortal life thou shalt appoint for me. Let the death of friends and relations help to keep me always mindful of my own mortality. And grant, that by thy grace I may here apply my heart to wisdom, and may hereafter by thy mercy be received into that everlasting kingdom, where all tears shall be wiped from all faces, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Hear me, O merciful Father, for the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by a Person troubled in Mind.

Almighty God, who beholdest with compassion and mercy the weaknesses and frailties of us thy sinful creatures; look down on me, I beseech thee, and deliver me, if it be thy blessed will, from the distress of mind under which I labour. Strengthen my judgment, and inform my understanding, that I may rightly know my duty; and grant that I may act on all occasions, and in every circumstance of life, in the manner most acceptable to thee. Pardon my secret sins and infirmities, and preserve me from all wilful neglects and offences. If thou seest it consistent with thy glory, and with the everlasting welfare of my soul, fill me with that fervency of affection towards thee, and with that measure of spiritual comfort and assurance, which may preserve my mind in a frame of cheerfulness and composure. But if trouble and bitterness of mind be more expedient for me, continue to me both this and all other afflictions which thou seest most conducive to my future happiness, and grant that I may bear them with patience and resignation. Let thine Holy Spirit direct and support me under every trial, and enable me so to walk in thy faith and fear, that I may at last be received into thy heavenly kingdom, through the merits and mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by an Old Person.

O gracious Lord, my maker and my preserver, I give thee thanks for the long continuance which thou hast granted me in this world, in order that I may be the better prepared for another. Enable me by thy grace to make a right use of the time afforded me, and give me a true and deep repentance of the sins which I have committed. Support me by thy help under the infirmities of age, keep me from covetousness, and fretfulness, and from all unreasonable fears, and cares. Give me that degree of ease and health which thou seest most convenient for me; wean my affections and desires from the things of this life, and keep me continually prepared for death; through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person condemned to die.

[From Dr. Inet.]

O most just and holy Lord God, who bringest to light the hidden things of darkness, and by thy just and wise providence dost bring sin to shame and punishment; disappointing the hopes of wicked men; visiting their sins upon them in this present life, that thou mayest deter others from the evil of their ways, and save their souls in the day of judgment; O Lord, in mercy look down upon this thy servant, who now is before thee to confess thy justice in making *him* a sad example to others. *He* with sorrow and shame confesseth it would be just with thee, should death eternal be the wages of *his* sins, and everlasting sorrow the recompense of *his* iniquity. *He* has, we confess, O Lord, despised thy mercy, and abused thy goodness, and has therefore no reason to expect any other than to be made an everlasting sacrifice to thy justice. When thou hast, by the ministry of thy word, and the interposition of thy providence, called *him* to repentance, *he* has slighted thine admonitions. O, how just therefore would it be now in thee to disregard *his* cry, in this day of trouble, when distress and anguish are come upon *him!* *He* confesseth that *he* hath hardened *his* heart, notwithstanding all thy importunities to *him* to repent and live; that *he* has still gone on from one wickedness to another, eagerly repeating the works of darkness, and even hating to be reformed; that *he* has notoriously broken *his* baptismal vows, and given encouragement to others to blaspheme our holy faith, and that on these accounts *he* has nothing to expect but that thou shouldst deal with *him* according to *his* sins, and reward *him* according to the multitude of *his* offences. But thou, O God, hast been pleased to declare, that with thee is mercy and plenteous redemption; that thou desirest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live. Thou hast so loved the world, that thou gavest thy only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. O, let not *him* whom we are now commending to thy mercy, for ever perish and be lost. Have compassion upon a miserable sinner, who owns *he* deserves eternally to die; and let *him* find mercy in

his distress. Pardon, we earnestly entreat thee, *his* wilful and *his* heedless follies, *his* errors, and *his* crying and notorious sins; particularly that for which *he* is now to die. O Lord, thou God of mercy, who art abundant in goodness, have pity on the work of thine own hands. Bury *his* sins in *his* grave, and, however they may rise up in this world to disgrace *him*, let them never rise up in the next to condemn *him:* and whatever *he* suffers here, let *him* hereafter be in the number of those whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. However men, in the execution of justice, and to deter others from being guilty of the like wickedness, may kill *his* body; let neither *his* body nor *his* soul be destroyed in hell, but be delivered from eternal condemnation, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who died to save sinners. *Amen.*

A Prayer of Preparation for Death.

O Almighty God, Maker and Judge of all men, have mercy upon me, thy weak and sinful creature; and if by thy most wise and righteous appointment the hour of death be approaching towards me, enable me to meet it with a mind fully prepared for it, and to pass through this great and awful trial in the manner most profitable for me. O let me not leave any thing undone which may help to make my departure safe and happy, or to qualify me for the highest degree of thy favour that I am capable of attaining. Pardon the sins which I have committed against thee by thought, word, and deed, and all my neglects of duty. Pardon the sins which I have committed against my neighbour; and if others have wronged or offended me, incline my heart freely and fully to forgive them. Cleanse my soul from all its corruptions, and transform it into the likeness of thy Son Jesus Christ; that I may behold thy face in glory, and be made partaker of thy heavenly kingdom. And, O merciful Father, give me that supply of spiritual comfort, which thou seest needful for me in my present condition: and grant that, when my change comes, I may die with a quiet conscience, with a well-grounded assurance of thy favour, and a joyful hope of a blessed resurrection; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

THE MINISTRATION

OF PUBLIC BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

TO BE USED IN CHURCHES.

The people are to be admonished, that it is most convenient that baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other holy-days, when the most number of persons come together; as well for that the congregation there present, may testify the receiving of them that be newly baptised into the number of Christ's church; as also because, in the baptism of infants, every man present be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his baptism. For which cause also it is expedient that baptism be ministered in the vulgar tongue. Nevertheless (if necessity so require) children may be baptised on any other day.

And note, That there shall be for every male child to be baptised, two godfathers and one godmother; and for every female, one godfather and two godmothers.

When there are children to be baptised, the parent shall give knowledge thereof over night, or in the morning, before the beginning of morning prayer, to the Curate. And then the godfathers and godmothers, and the people with the children, must be ready at the font, either immediately after the last lesson at morning prayer, or else immediately after the last lesson at evening prayer, as the Curate by his discretion shall appoint. And the Priest coming to the font (which is then to be filled with pure water,) and standing there, shall say,

Q. Hath this child been already baptized, or no?

If they answer *No*, then shall the Priest proceed as follows:

Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, none can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerated and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he will grant *this child* that thing which by nature *he* cannot have, that *he* may be baptised with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy church, and be made *a* lively *member* of the same.

Then shall the Priest say,

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who of thy great mercy didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water, and also didst safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy baptism; and by the baptism of thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin; we beseech thee for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt mercifully look upon *this child;* wash *him* and sanctify *him* with the Holy Ghost, that *he*, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the

ark of Christ's church; and being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally *he* may come to the land of everlasting life, there to reign with thee world without end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty and immortal God, the aid of all that need, the helper of all that flee to thee for succour, the life of them that believe, and the resurrection of the dead; we call upon thee for *this infant*, that *he*, coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of *his* sins by spiritual regeneration. Receive *him*, O Lord, as thou hast promised by thy well-beloved Son, saying, Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. So give now unto us that ask; let us that seek, find; open the gate unto us that knock; that *this infant* may enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest stand up, and shall say,

Hear the words of the Gospel written by St. Mark, in the tenth chapter, at the thirteenth verse:

"They brought young children to Christ, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

After the Gospel is read, the Minister shall make this brief exhortation upon the words of the Gospel.

Beloved, ye hear in this Gospel the words of our Saviour Christ, that he commanded the children to be brought unto him; how he blamed those that would have kept them from him; how he exhorted all men to follow their innocency. Ye perceive how by his outward gesture and deed he declared his good will towards them; for he embraced them in his arms, he laid his hands upon them, and blessed them. Doubt ye not, therefore, but earnestly believe, that he will likewise favourably receive *this* present *infant;* that he will embrace *him* with the arms of his mercy; that he will give unto *him* the blessing of eternal life, and make *him partaker* of his everlasting kingdom. Wherefore we being thus persuaded of the good will of our heavenly Father towards *this infant*, declared by his Son Jesus Christ, and nothing doubting but that he favourably alloweth this charitable work of ours, in bringing *this infant* to his holy baptism, let us faithfully and devoutly give thanks unto him, and say,—

Almighty and everlasting God, heavenly Father, we give thee humble thanks that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace and faith in thee: increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy Holy Spirit to *this infant*, that *he* may be born again, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest speak unto the godfathers and godmothers in this wise:

Dearly beloved, ye have brought *this child* here to be baptized; ye have prayed that our Lord Jesus Christ would vouchsafe to receive *him*, to release *him* of *his* sins, to sanctify *him* with the Holy Ghost, to give *him* the kingdom of heaven, and everlasting life. You have heard also, that our Lord Jesus Christ hath promised also in his Gospel, to grant all these things that ye have prayed for; which promise he for his part will most surely keep and perform. Wherefore after this promise made by Christ, *this infant* must also faithfully, for *his* part, promise by you that are *his* sureties, (until *he* come of age to take it upon *himself*,) that *he* will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his commandments.

I demand therefore,

Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?

Answ. I renounce them all.

Minister.

Dost thou believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?

And in Jesus Christ his only-begotten Son, our Lord? And that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; that he went down into hell, and also did rise again the third day; that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; and from thence shall come again, at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead?

And dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic church; the communion of saints; the remission of sins; the resurrection of the flesh; and everlasting life after death?

Answ. All this I steadfastly believe.

Minister.

Wilt thou then be baptized in this faith?

Answ. This is my desire.

Minister.

Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

Answ. I will.

Then the Priest shall say,

O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in *this Child* may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in *him*. *Amen.*

Grant that all carnal affections may die in *him*, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in *him*. *Amen.*

Grant that *he* may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh. *Amen.*

Grant that whosoever is here dedicated to thee by our office and ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded, through thy mercy, O blessed Lord God, who dost live and govern all things, world without end. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, whose most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, did shed out of his most precious side both water and blood, and gave commandment to his disciples, that they should go and teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that *this child* now to be baptized therein, may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then the Priest shall take the Child into his hands, and shall say to the godfathers and godmothers,

Name this child.

And then naming it after them (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it,) he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily, saying,

N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

But if they certify that the Child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it, saying the aforesaid words,

N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest say,

WE receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock,* and do sign *him* with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter *he* shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto *his* life's end. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest say,

SEEING now, dearly beloved brethren, that *this child* is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that *this child* may lead the rest of *his* life according to this beginning.

Then shall be said, all kneeling,

OUR Father which art in heaven; Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest say,

WE yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate *this infant* with thy Holy Spirit, to receive *him* for thine own *child* by adoption, and to incorporate *him* into thy holy church. And we humbly beseech thee to grant, that *he*, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin: and that as *he is* made *partaker* of the death of thy Son, *he* may also be *partaker* of his resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of thy holy church, *he* may be *an* inheritor of thine everlasting kingdom, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Then, all standing up, the Priest shall say to the godfathers and godmothers this exhortation following:

FORASMUCH as *this child hath* promised by you *his* sureties to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; ye must remember that it is your parts and duties to see that *this infant* be taught, so soon as *he* shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession, *he hath* here made by you. And that *he* may know these things the better, ye shall call upon *him* to hear sermons; and chiefly ye shall provide that *he* may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in the vulgar tongue, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; and that *this child* may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and Christian life; remembering always, that baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him; that as he died, and rose again, for us; so should we, who are baptised, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.

Then shall he add, and say,

Ye are to take care that *this child* be brought to the bishop, to be confirmed by him, so soon as *he* can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, and be further instructed in the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose.

It is certain, by God's word, that children which are baptised, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.

To take away all scruple concerning the use of the sign of the cross in baptism; the true explication thereof, and the just reasons for the retaining of it, may be seen in the XXXth Canon, first published in the year MDCIV.

THE MINISTRATION

OF

PRIVATE BAPTISM OF CHILDREN

IN HOUSES.

THE Curate of the parish shall often admonish the people, that they defer not the baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth, or other holy-day falling between, unless upon a great and reasonable cause, to be approved by the Curate.

And also they shall warn them, that, without like great cause and necessity, they procure not their children to be baptised at home in their houses. But when need shall compel them so to do, then baptism shall be administered on this fashion:

First; let the Minister of the parish (or, in his absence, any other lawful Minister that can be procured,) with them that are present, call upon God, and say the Lord's Prayer, and so many of the collects appointed to be said before in the form of Public Baptism, as the time and present exigence will suffer. And then, the Child being named by some one that is present, the Minister shall pour water upon it, saying these words;

* Here the Priest shall make a cross upon the Child's forehead.

N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

Then all kneeling down, the Minister shall give thanks unto God, saying;

We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate *this infant* with thy Holy Spirit, to receive *him* for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate *him* into thy holy church. And we humbly beseech thee to grant that as *he* is now made partaker of the death of thy Son, so *he* may be also of his resurrection; and that finally, with the residue of thy saints, *he* may inherit thine everlasting kingdom, through the same, thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

And let them not doubt but that the Child, so baptized, is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again. Yet, nevertheless, if the Child, which is after this sort baptized, do afterwards live, it is expedient that it be brought into the church, to the intent that, if the Minister of the same parish did himself baptize that Child, the congregation may be certified of the true form of baptism by him privately before used.

A VIEW

OF THE

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN THREE PARTS.

TO THE HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND JAMES YORK, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF ELY.

My Lord,—*When, five years ago, an important station in the University of Cambridge awaited your Lordship's disposal, you were pleased to offer it to me. The circumstances under which this offer was made, demand a public acknowledgment. I had never seen your Lordship; I possessed no connexion which could possibly recommend me to your favour; I was known to you, only by my endeavours, in common with many others, to discharge my duty as a tutor in the University; and by some very imperfect, but certainly well-intended, and, as you thought, useful publications since. In an age by no means wanting in examples of honourable patronage, although this deserves not to be mentioned in respect of the object of your Lordship's choice, it is inferior to none in the purity and disinterestedness of the motives which suggested it.*

How the following work may be received, I pretend not to foretell. My first prayer concerning it is, that it may do good to any: my second hope, that it may assist, what it hath always been my earnest wish to promote, the religious part of an academical education. If in this latter view it might seem, in any degree, to excuse your Lordship's judgment of its author, I shall be gratified by the reflection, that, to a kindness flowing from public principles, I have made the best public return in my power.

In the mean time, and in every event, I rejoice in the opportunity here afforded me of testifying the sense I entertain of your Lordship's conduct, and of a notice which I regard as the most flattering distinction of my life. I am, My Lord, *with sentiments of gratitude and respect, your Lordship's faithful and most obliged servant,* WILLIAM PALEY.

PREPARATORY CONSIDERATIONS.

I deem it unnecessary to prove that mankind stood in need of a revelation, because I have met with no serious person who thinks that, even under the Christian revelation, we have too much light, or any degree of assurance which is superfluous. I desire, moreover, that, in judging of Christianity, it may be remembered, that the question lies between this religion and none: for, if the Christian religion be not credible, no one, with whom we have to do, will support the pretensions of any other.

Suppose, then, the world we live in to have had a Creator; suppose it to appear, from the predominant aim and tendency of the provisions and contrivances observable in the universe, that the Deity, when he formed it, consulted for the happiness of his sensitive creation; suppose the disposition which dictated this counsel to continue; suppose a a part of the creation to have received faculties from their Maker, by which they are capable of rendering a moral obedience to his will, and of voluntarily pursuing any end for which he has designed them; suppose the Creator to intend for these, his rational and accountable agents, a second state of existence, in which their situation will be regulated by their behaviour in the first state, by which supposition (and by no other) the objection to the divine government in not putting a difference between the good and the bad, and the inconsistency of this confusion with the care and benevolence discoverable in the works of the Deity, is done away; suppose it to be of the utmost importance to the subjects of this dispensation to know what is intended for them; that is, suppose the

knowledge of it to be highly conducive to the happiness of the species, a purpose which so many provisions of nature are calculated to promote: Suppose, nevertheless, almost the whole race, either by the imperfection of their faculties, the misfortune of their situation, or by the loss of some prior revelation, to want this knowledge, and not to be likely, without the aid of a new revelation, to attain it: Under these circumstances, is it improbable that a revelation should be made? is it incredible that God should interpose for such a purpose? Suppose him to design for mankind a future state; is it unlikely that he should acquaint him with it?

Now in what way can a revelation be made, but by miracles? In none which we are able to conceive. Consequently, in whatever degree it is probable, or not very improbable, that a revelation should be communicated to mankind at all; in the same degree is it probable, or not very improbable, that miracles should be wrought. Therefore, when miracles are related to have been wrought in the promulgating of a revelation manifestly wanted, and, if true, of inestimable value, the improbability which arises from the miraculous nature of the things related, is not greater than the original improbability that such a revelation should be imparted by God.

I wish it, however, to be correctly understood, in what manner, and to what extent, this argument is alleged. We do not assume the attributes of the Deity, or the existence of a future state, in order to *prove* the reality of miracles. That reality always must be proved by evidence. We assert only, that in miracles adduced in support of revelation, there is not any such antecedent improbability as no testimony can surmount. And for the purpose of maintaining this assertion, we contend, that the incredibility of miracles related to have been wrought in attestation of a message from God, conveying intelligence of a future state of rewards and punishments, and teaching mankind how to prepare themselves for that state, is not in itself greater than the event, call it either probable or improbable, of the two following propositions being true: namely, first, that a future state of existence should be destined by God for his human creation; and, secondly, that, being so destined, he should acquaint them with it. It is not necessary for our purpose, that these propositions be capable of proof, or even that, by arguments drawn from the light of nature, they can be made out to be probable; it is enough that we are able to say concerning them, that they are not so violently improbable, so contradictory to what we already believe of the divine power and character, that either the propositions themselves, or facts strictly connected with the propositions (and therefore no further improbable than they are improbable,) ought to be rejected at first sight, and to be rejected by whatever strength or complication of evidence they be attested.

This is the prejudication we would resist. For to this length does a modern objection to miracles go, viz. that no human testimony can in any case render them credible. I think the reflection above stated, that, if there be a revelation, there must be miracles, and that under the circumstances in which the human species are placed, a revelation is not improbable, or not improbable in any great degree, to be a fair answer to the whole objection.

But since it is an objection which stands in the very threshold of our argument, and if admitted, is a bar to every proof, and to all future reasoning upon the subject, it may be necessary, before we proceed further, to examine the principle upon which it professes to be founded; which principle is concisely this, That it is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true, but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false.

Now there appears a small ambiguity in the term "experience," and in the phrases, "contrary to experience," or "contradicting experience," which it may be necessary to remove in the first place. Strictly speaking, the narrative of a fact is *then* only contrary to experience, when the fact is related to have existed at a time and place, at which time and place we being present, did not perceive it to exist: as if it should be asserted, that in a particular room, and at a particular hour of a certain day, a man was raised from the dead, in which room, and at the time specified, we being present and looking on, perceived no such event to have taken place. Here the assertion is contrary to experience properly so called: and this is a contrariety which no evidence can surmount. It matters nothing, whether the fact be of a miraculous nature or not. But although this be the experience, and the contrariety, which Archbishop Tillotson alleged in the quotation with which Mr. Hume opens his Essay, it is certainly not that experience, nor that contrariety, which Mr. Hume himself intended to object. And, short of this, I know no intelligible signification which can be affixed to the term "contrary to experience," but one, viz. that of not having ourselves experienced any thing similar to the thing related, or such things not being generally experienced by others. I say "not generally:" for to state concerning the fact in question, that no such thing was *ever* experienced, or that *universal* experience is against it, is to assume the subject of the controversy.

Now the improbability which arises from the want (for this properly is a want, not a contradiction) of experience, is only equal to the probability there is, that, if the thing were true, we should experience things similar to it, or that such things would be generally experienced. Suppose it then to be true that miracles were wrought on the first promulgation of Christianity, when nothing but miracles could decide its authority, is it certain that such miracles would be repeated so often, and in so many places, as to become objects of general experience? Is it a probability approaching to certainty? is it a probability of any great strength or force? is it such as no evidence can encounter? And yet this probability is the exact *converse*, and therefore the exact measure, of the improbability which arises from the want of experience, and which Mr. Hume represents as invincible by human testimony.

It is not like alleging a new law of nature, or a new experiment in natural philosophy; because, when these are related, it is expected that, under the same circumstances, the same effect will follow universally; and in proportion as this expectation is justly entertained, the want of a corresponding experience negatives the history. But to expect concerning a miracle, that it should succeed upon a repetition, is to expect that which would make it cease to be a miracle, which is contrary to its nature as such, and would totally destroy the use and purpose for which it was wrought.

The force of experience as an objection to mi-

racles, is founded in the presumption, either that that the course of nature is invariable, or that, if it be ever varied, variations will be frequent and general. Has the necessity of this alternative been demonstrated? Permit us to call the course of nature the agency of an intelligent Being; and is there any good reason for judging this state of the case to be probable? Ought we not rather to expect that such a Being, on occasions of peculiar importance, may interrupt the order which he had appointed; yet, that such occasions should return seldom; that these interruptions consequently should be confined to the experience of a few; that the want of it, therefore, in many, should be matter neither of surprise nor objection.

But as a continuation of the argument from experience, it is said that, when we advance accounts of miracles, we assign effects without causes, or we attribute effects to causes inadequate to the purpose, or to causes, of the operation of which we have no experience. Of what causes, we may ask, and of what effects does the objection speak? If it be answered that, when we ascribe the cure of the palsy to a touch, of blindness to the anointing of the eyes with clay, or the raising of the dead to a word, we lay ourselves open to this imputation; we reply, that we ascribe no such effects to such causes. We perceive no virtue or energy in these things more than in other things of the same kind. They are merely signs to connect the miracle with its end. The effect we ascribe simply to the volition of the Deity; of whose existence and power, not to say of whose presence and agency, we have previous and independent proof. We have, therefore, all we seek for in the works of rational agents,—a sufficient power and an adequate motive. In a word, once believe that there is a God, and miracles are not incredible.

Mr. Hume states the case of miracles to be a contest of opposite improbabilities, that is to say, a question whether it be more improbable that the miracle should be true, or the testimony false: and this I think a fair account of the controversy. But herein I remark a want of argumentative justice, that, in describing the improbability of miracles, he suppresses all those circumstances of extenuation, which result from our knowledge of the existence, power, and disposition of the Deity; his concern in the creation, the end answered by the miracle, the importance of that end, and its subserviency to the plan pursued in the work of nature. As Mr. Hume has represented the question, miracles are alike incredible to him who is previously assured of the constant agency of a Divine Being, and to him who believes that no such Being exists in the universe. They are equally incredible, whether related to have been wrought upon occasions the most deserving, and for purposes the most beneficial, or for no assignable end whatever, or for an end confessedly trifling or pernicious. This surely cannot be a correct statement. In adjusting also the other side of the balance, the strength and weight of testimony, this author has provided an answer to every possible accumulation of historical proof by telling us, that we are not obliged to explain how the story of the evidence arose. Now I think that we *are* obliged: not, perhaps, to show by positive accounts how it did, but by a probable hypothesis how it might so happen. The existence of the testimony is a phenomenon; the truth of the fact solves the phenomenon. If we reject this solution, we ought to have some other to rest in; and none, even by our adversaries, can be admitted, which is not inconsistent with the principles that regulate human affairs and human conduct at present, or which makes men *then* to have been a different kind of beings from what they are now.

But the short consideration which, independently of every other, convinces me that there is no solid foundation in Mr. Hume's conclusion, is the following. When a theorem is proposed to a mathematician, the first thing he does with it is to try it upon a simple case, and if it produce a false result, he is sure that there must be some mistake in the demonstration. Now, to proceed in this way with what may be called Mr. Hume's theorem. If twelve men, whose probity and good sense I had long known, should seriously and circumstantially relate to me an account of a miracle wrought before their eyes, and in which it was impossible that they should be deceived; if the governor of the country, hearing a rumour of this account, should call these men into his presence, and offer them a short proposal, either to confess the imposture, or submit to be tied up to a gibbet; if they should refuse with one voice to acknowledge that there existed any falsehood or imposture in the case; if this threat were communicated to them separately, yet with no different effect; if it was at last executed; if I myself saw them, one after another, consenting to be racked, burnt, or strangled, rather than give up the truth of their account; still, if Mr. Hume's rule be my guide, I am not to believe them. Now I undertake to say that there exists not a sceptic in the world who would not believe them, or who would defend such incredulity.

Instances of spurious miracles supported by strong and apparent testimony, undoubtedly demand examination; Mr. Hume has endeavoured to fortify his argument by some examples of this kind. I hope in a proper place to show that none of them reach the strength or circumstances of the Christian evidence. In these however, consists the weight of his objection: in the principle itself, I am persuaded, there is none.

PART I.

OF THE DIRECT HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY, AND WHEREIN IT IS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE EVIDENCE ALLEGED FOR OTHER MIRACLES.

THE two propositions which I shall endeavour to establish are these:

I. That there is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian Miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

II. That there is *not* satisfactory evidence, that persons professing to be original witnesses of other miracles, in their nature as certain as these are, have ever acted in the same manner, in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and

properly in consequence of their belief of those accounts.

The first of these propositions, as it forms the argument, will stand at the head of the following *nine* chapters.

CHAPTER I.

There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

To support this proposition, two points are necessary to be made out: first, that the Founder of the institution, his associates and immediate followers, acted the part which the proposition imputes to them: secondly, that they did so in attestation of the miraculous history recorded in our Scriptures, and solely in consequence of their belief of the truth of this history.

Before we produce any particular testimony to the activity and sufferings which compose the subject of our first assertion, it will be proper to consider the degree of probability which the assertion derives from the *nature of the case*, that is, by inferences from those parts of the case which, in point of fact, are on all hands acknowledged.

First, then, the Christian religion exists, and therefore by some means or other was established. Now it either owes the principle of its establishment, *i. e.* its first publication, to the activity of the Person who was the founder of the institution, and of those who were joined with him in the undertaking, or we are driven upon the strange supposition, that, although they might lie by, others would take it up; although they were quiet and silent, other persons busied themselves in the success and propagation of their story. This is perfectly incredible. To me it appears little less than certain, that, if the first announcing of the religion by the Founder had not been followed up by the zeal and industry of his immediate disciples, the attempt must have expired in its birth. Then as to the kind and degree of exertion which was employed, and the mode of life to which these persons submitted, we reasonably suppose it to be like that which we observe in all others who voluntarily become missionaries of a new faith. Frequent, earnest, and laborious preaching, constantly conversing with religious persons upon religion, a sequestration from the common pleasures, engagements, and varieties of life, and an addiction to one serious object, compose the habits of such men. I do not say that this mode of life is without enjoyment, but I say that the enjoyment springs from sincerity. With a consciousness at the bottom, of hollowness and falsehood, the fatigue and restraint would become insupportable. I am apt to believe that very few hypocrites engage in these undertakings; or, however, persist in them long. Ordinarily speaking, nothing can overcome the indolence of mankind, the love which is natural to most tempers of cheerful society and cheerful scenes, or the desire, which is common to all, of personal ease and freedom, but conviction.

Secondly, it is also highly probable, from the nature of the case, that the propagation of the new religion was attended with difficulty and danger. As addressed to the Jews, it was a system adverse not only to their habitual opinions, but to those opinions, upon which their hopes, their partialities, their pride, their consolation, was founded. This people, with or without reason, had worked themselves into a persuasion, that some signal and greatly advantageous change was to be effected in the condition of their country, by the agency of a long-promised messenger from heaven. * The rulers of the Jews, their leading sect, their priesthood, had been the authors of this persuasion to the common people. So that it was not merely the conjecture of theoretical divines, or the secret expectation of a few recluse devotees, but it was become the popular hope and passion, and like all popular opinions, undoubting, and impatient of contradiction. They clung to this hope under every misfortune of their country, and with more tenacity as their dangers or calamities increased. To find, therefore, that expectations so gratifying were to be worse than disappointed; that they were to end in the diffusion of a mild unambitious religion, which, instead of victories and triumphs, instead of exalting their nation and institution above the rest of the world, was to advance those whom they despised to an equality with themselves, in those very points of comparison in which they most valued their own distinction, could be no very pleasing discovery to a Jewish mind; nor could the messengers of such intelligence expect to be well received or easily credited. The doctrine was equally harsh and novel. The extending of the kingdom of God to those who did not conform to the law of Moses, was a notion that had never before entered into the thoughts of a Jew.

The character of the new institution was, in other respects also, ungrateful to Jewish habits and principles. Their own religion was in a high degree technical. Even the enlightened Jew placed a great deal of stress upon the ceremonies of his law, saw in them a great deal of virtue and efficacy; the gross and vulgar had scarcely any thing else; and the hypocritical and ostentatious magnified them above measure, as being the instruments of their own reputation and influence. The Christian scheme, without formally repealing the Levitical code, lowered its estimation extremely. In the place of strictness and zeal in performing the observances which that code prescribed, or which tradition had added to it, the new sect preached up faith, well-regulated affections, inward purity, and moral rectitude of disposition, as the true ground, on the part of the worshipper, of merit and acceptance with God. This, however rational it may appear, or recommending to us at present, did not by any means facilitate the plan then. On the contrary, to disparage those qualities which the highest characters in the country valued themselves most upon,

* "Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur."—Sueton Vespasian. cap. 4—8.

"Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur."—Tacit. Histor. lib. v. cap. 9—13.

was a sure way of making powerful enemies. As if the frustration of the national hope was not enough, the long-esteemed merit of ritual zeal and punctuality was to be decried, and that by Jews preaching to Jews.

The ruling party at Jerusalem had just before crucified the Founder of the religion. That is a fact which will not be disputed. They, therefore, who stood forth to preach the religion, must necessarily reproach these rulers with an execution, which they could not but represent as an unjust and cruel murder. This would not render their office more easy, or their situation more safe.

With regard to the interference of the Roman government which was then established in Judea, I should not expect, that, despising as it did the religion of the country, it would, if left to itself, animadvert, either with much vigilance or much severity, upon the schisms and controversies which arose within it. Yet there was that in Christianity which might easily afford a handle of accusation with a jealous government. The Christians avowed an unqualified obedience to a new master. They avowed also that he was the person who had been foretold to the Jews under the suspected title of King. The spiritual nature of this kingdom, the consistency of this obedience with civil subjection, were distinctions too refined to be entertained by a Roman president, who viewed the business at a great distance, or through the medium of very hostile representations. Our histories accordingly inform us, that this was the turn which the enemies of Jesus gave to his character and pretensions in their remonstrances with Pontius Pilate. And Justin Martyr, about a hundred years afterwards, complains that the same mistake prevailed in his time: "Ye, having heard that we are waiting for a kingdom, suppose, without distinguishing, that we mean a human kingdom, when in truth we speak of that which is with God."* And it was undoubtedly a natural source of calumny and misconstruction.

The preachers of Christianity had, therefore, to contend with prejudice backed by power. They had to come forward to a disappointed people, to a priesthood possessing a considerable share of municipal authority, and actuated by strong motives of opposition and resentment; and they had to do this under a foreign government, to whose favour they made no pretensions, and which was constantly surrounded by their enemies. The well-known, because the experienced fate of reformers, whenever the reformation subverts some reigning opinion, and does not proceed upon a change that has already taken place in the sentiments of a country, will not allow, much less lead us to suppose, that the first propagators of Christianity at Jerusalem and in Judea, under the difficulties and the enemies they had to contend with, and entirely destitute as they were of force, authority, or protection, could execute their mission with personal ease and safety.

Let us next inquire, what might reasonably be expected by the preachers of Christianity when they turned themselves to the heathen public. Now the first thing that strikes us is, that the religion they carried with them was *exclusive*. It denied without reserve the truth of every article of heathen mythology, the existence of every object of their worship. It accepted no compromise; it admitted no comprehension. It must prevail, if it prevailed at all, by the overthrow of every statue, altar, and temple, in the world. It will not easily be credited, that a design, so bold as this was, could in any age be attempted to be carried into execution with impunity.

For it ought to be considered, that this was not setting forth, or magnifying the character and worship of some new competitor for a place in the Pantheon, whose pretensions might be discussed or asserted without questioning the reality of any others; it was pronouncing all other gods to be false, and all other worship vain. From the facility with which the polytheism of ancient nations admitted new objects of worship into the number of their acknowledged divinities, or the patience with which they might entertain proposals of this kind, we can argue nothing as to their toleration of a system, or of the publishers and active propagators of a system, which swept away the very foundation of the existing establishment. The one was nothing more than what it would be, in popish countries, to add a saint to the calendar; the other was to abolish and tread under foot the calendar itself.

Secondly, it ought also to be considered, that this was not the case of philosophers propounding in their books, or in their schools, doubts concerning the truth of the popular creed, or even avowing their disbelief of it. These philosophers did not go about from place to place to collect proselytes from amongst the common people; to form in the heart of the country societies professing their tenets; to provide for the order, instruction, and permanency of these societies; nor did they enjoin their followers to withdraw themselves from the public worship of the temples, or refuse a compliance with rites instituted by the laws.* These things are what the Christians did, and what the philosophers did not; and in these consisted the activity and danger of the enterprise.

Thirdly, it ought also to be considered, that this danger proceeded not merely from solemn acts and public resolutions of the state, but from sudden bursts of violence at particular places, from the license of the populace, the rashness of some magistrates, and negligence of others; from the influence and instigation of interested adversaries, and, in general, from the variety and warmth of opinion which an errand so novel and extraordinary could not fail of exciting. I can conceive that the teachers of Christianity might both fear and suffer much from these causes, without any general persecution being denounced against them by imperial authority. Some length of time, I should suppose, might pass, before the vast machine of the Roman empire would be put in motion, or its attention be obtained to religious controversy: but during that time, a great deal of ill usage might be endured, by a set of friendless, unprotected travellers, telling men, wherever they came, that the religion of their ancestors, the religion in which they had been brought up, the re-

* Ap. Ima. p. 16. Ed. Third.

* The best of the ancient philosophers, Plato, Cicero, and Epictetus, allowed, or rather enjoined, men to worship the gods of the country, and in the established form. See passages to this purpose, collected from their works by Dr. Clarke, Nat. and Rev. Rel. p. 180. ed. 5.—Except Socrates, they all thought it wiser to comply with the laws than to contend.

ligion of the state, and of the magistrate, the rites which they frequented, the pomp which they admired, was throughout a system of folly and delusion.

Nor do I think that the teachers of Christianity would find protection in that general disbelief of the popular theology, which is supposed to have prevailed amongst the intelligent part of the heathen public. It is by no means true that unbelievers are usually tolerant. They are not disposed (and why should they?) to endanger the present state of things, by suffering a religion of which they believe nothing, to be disturbed by another of which they believe as little. They are ready themselves to conform to any thing; and are, oftentimes, amongst the foremost to procure conformity from others, by any method which they think likely to be efficacious. When was ever a change of religion patronized by infidels? How little, notwithstanding the reigning scepticism, and the magnified liberality of that age, the true principles of toleration were understood by the wisest men amongst them, may be gathered from two eminent and uncontested examples. The younger Pliny, polished as he was by all the literature of that soft and elegant period, could gravely pronounce this monstrous judgment:—"Those who persisted in declaring themselves Christians, I ordered to be led away to punishment, (*i. e.* to execution,) for I DID NOT DOUBT, *whatever it was that they confessed, that contumacy and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished.*" His master, Trajan, a mild and accomplished prince, went, nevertheless, no further in his sentiments of moderation and equity, than what appears in the following rescript: "The Christians are not to be sought for; but if any are brought before you, and convicted, they are to be punished." And this direction he gives, after it had been reported to him by his own president, that, by the most strict examination nothing could be discovered in the principles of these persons, but "a bad and excessive superstition," accompanied, it seems, with an oath or mutual federation, "to allow themselves in no crime or immoral conduct whatever." The truth is, the ancient heathens considered religion entirely as an affair of state, as much under the tuition of the magistrate, as any other part of the police. The religion of that age was not merely allied to the state; it was incorporated into it. Many of its offices were administered by the magistrate. Its titles of pontiffs, augurs, and flamens, were borne by senators, consuls, and generals. Without discussing, therefore, the truth of the theology, they resented every affront put upon the established worship, as a direct opposition to the authority of government.

Add to which, that the religious systems of those times, however ill supported by evidence, had been long established. The *ancient* religion of a country has always many votaries, and sometimes not the fewer, because its origin is hidden in remoteness and obscurity. Men have a natural veneration for antiquity, especially in matters of religion. What Tacitus says of the Jewish, was more applicable to the heathen establishment: "Hi ritus, quoquo modo inducti, antiquitate defenduntur." It was also a splendid and sumptuous worship. It had its priesthood, its endowments, its temples. Statuary, painting, architecture, and music, contributed their effect to its ornament and magnificence. It abounded in festival shows and solemnities, to which the common people are greatly addicted, and which were of a nature to engage them much more than any thing of that sort among us. These things would retain great numbers on its side by the fascination of spectacle and pomp, as well as interest many in its preservation by the advantage which they drew from it. "It was moreover interwoven," as Mr. Gibbon rightly represents it, "with every circumstance of business or pleasure, of public or private life, with all the offices and amusements of society." On the due celebration also of its rites, the people were taught to believe, and did believe, that the prosperity of their country in a great measure depended.

I am willing to accept the account of the matter which is given by Mr. Gibbon: "The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful:" and I would ask from which of these three classes of men were the Christian missionaries to look for protection or impunity? Could they expect it from the people, "whose acknowledged confidence in the public religion" they subverted from its foundation? From the philosopher, who, "considering all religions as equally false," would of course rank theirs among the number, with the addition of regarding them as busy and troublesome zealots? Or from the magistrate, who, satisfied with the "utility" of the subsisting religion, would not be likely to countenance a spirit of proselytism and innovation;—a system which declared war against every other, and which, if it prevailed, must end in a total rupture of public opinion; an upstart religion, in a word, which was not content with its own authority, but must disgrace all the settled religions of the world? It was not to be imagined that he would endure with patience, that the religion of the emperor and of the state should be calumniated and borne down by a company of superstitious and despicable Jews.

Lastly, the *nature of the case* affords a strong proof, that the original teachers of Christianity, in consequence of their new profession, entered upon a new and singular course of life. We may be allowed to presume, that the institution which they preached to others, they conformed to in their own persons; because this is no more than what every teacher of a new religion both does, and must do, in order to obtain either proselytes or hearers. The change which this would produce was very considerable. It is a change which we do not easily estimate, because, ourselves and all about us being habituated to the institutions from our infancy, it is what we neither experience nor observe. After men became Christians, much of their time was spent in prayer and devotion, in religious meetings, in celebrating the eucharist, in conferences, in exhortations, in preaching, in an affectionate intercourse with one another, and correspondence with other societies. Perhaps their mode of life, in its form and habit, was not very unlike the Unitas Fratrum, or the modern Methodists. Think then what it was to become *such* at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Antioch, or even at Jerusalem. How new! how alien from all their former habits and ideas, and from those of every body about them! What a revolution there must have been of opinions and prejudices to bring the matter to this!

We know what the precepts of the religion are; how pure, how benevolent, how disinterested a conduct they enjoin; and that this purity and benevolence are extended to the very thoughts and affections. We are not, perhaps, at liberty to take for granted that the lives of the preachers of Christianity were as perfect as their lessons; but we are entitled to contend, that the observable part of their behaviour must have agreed in a great measure with the duties which they taught. There was, therefore, (which is all that we assert,) a course of life pursued by them, different from that which they before led. And this is of great importance. Men are brought to any thing almost sooner than to change their habit of life, especially when the change is either inconvenient, or made against the force of natural inclination, or with the loss of accustomed indulgences. "It is the most difficult of all things to convert men from vicious habits to virtuous ones, as every one may judge from what he feels in himself, as well as from what he sees in others."* It is almost like making men over again.

Left then to myself, and without any more information than a knowledge of the existence of the religion, of the general story upon which it is founded, and that no act of power, force, and authority, was concerned in its first success, I should conclude, from the very nature and exigency of the case, that the Author of the religion, during his life, and his immediate disciples after his death, *exerted* themselves in spreading and publishing the institution throughout the country in which it began, and into which it was first carried; that, in the prosecution of this purpose, they underwent the labours and troubles which we observe the propagators of new sects to undergo; that the attempt must necessarily have also been in a high degree dangerous; that, from the subject of the mission, compared with the fixed opinions and prejudices of those to whom the missionaries were to address themselves, they could hardly fail of encountering strong and frequent opposition; that, by the hand of government, as well as from the sudden fury and unbridled license of the people, they would oftentimes experience injurious and cruel treatment; that, at any rate, they must have always had so much to fear for their personal safety, as to have passed their lives in a state of constant peril and anxiety; and lastly, that their mode of life and conduct, visibly at least, corresponded with the institution which they delivered, and, so far, was both new, and required continual self-denial.

* Hartley's Essays on Man, p. 190.

CHAPTER II.

There is satisfactory evidence that many professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

After thus considering what was *likely* to happen, we are next to inquire how the transaction is represented in the several accounts that have come down to us. And this inquiry is properly preceded by the other, for as much as the reception of these accounts may depend in part on the credibility of what they contain.

The obscure and distant view of Christianity, which some of the heathen writers of that age had gained, and which a few passages in their remaining works incidentally discover to us, offers itself to our notice in the first place; because, so far as this evidence goes, it is the concession of adversaries; the source from which it is drawn is unsuspected. Under this head, a quotation from Tacitus, well known to every scholar, must be inserted, as deserving particular attention. The reader will bear in mind that this passage was written about seventy years after Christ's death, and that it relates to transactions which took place about thirty years after that event.—Speaking of the fire which happened at Rome in the time of Nero, and of the suspicions which were entertained that the emperor himself was concerned in causing it, the historian proceeds in his narrative and observations thus:

"But neither these exertions, nor his largesses to the people, nor his offerings to the gods, did away the infamous imputation under which Nero lay, of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To put an end, therefore, to this report, he laid the guilt, and inflicted the most cruel punishments, upon a set of people, who were holden in abhorrence for their crimes, and called by the vulgar, *Christians*. The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, thus checked for a while, broke out again; and spread not only over Judea, where the evil originated, but through Rome also, whither every thing bad upon the earth finds its way, and is practised. Some who confessed their sect, were first seized, and afterwards, by their information, a vast multitude were apprehended, who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome, as of hatred to mankind. Their sufferings at their execution were aggravated by insult and mockery; for, some were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs; some were crucified; and others were wrapt in pitched shirts,* and set on fire when the day closed, that they might serve as lights to illuminate the night. Nero lent his own gardens for these executions, and exhibited at the same time a mock Circensian entertainment; being a spectator of the whole, in the dress of a charioteer, sometimes mingling with the crowd on foot, and sometimes viewing the spectacle from his car. This conduct made the sufferers pitied; and though they were criminals, and deserving the severest punishments, yet they were considered as sacrificed, not so much out of a regard to the public good, as to gratify the cruelty of one man."

Our concern with this passage at present is only so far as it affords a presumption in support of the proposition which we maintain, concerning the activity and sufferings of the first teachers of Christianity. Now considered in this view, it proves three things: 1st, that the Founder of the

* This is rather a paraphrase, but is justified by what the Scholiast upon Juvenal says; "Nero maleficos homines tæda et papyro et cera supervestiebat, et sic ad ignem admoveri jubebat."—Lard. Jewish and Heath. Test. vol, i. p. 359.

institution was put to death; 2dly, that in the same country in which he was put to death, the religion, after a short check, broke out again and spread; 3dly, that it so spread, as that, within thirty-four years from the author's death, a very great number of Christians (*ingens eorum multitudo*) were found at Rome. From which fact, the two following inferences may be fairly drawn: first, that if, in the space of thirty-four years from its commencement, the religion had spread throughout Judea, had extended itself to Rome, and there had numbered a great multitude of converts, the original teachers and missionaries of the institution could not have been *idle*; secondly, that when the Author of the undertaking was put to death as a malefactor for his attempt, the endeavours of his followers to establish his religion in the same country, amongst the same people, and in the same age, could not but be attended with danger.

Suetonius, a writer contemporary with Tacitus, describing the transactions of the same reign, uses these words: "Affecti suppliciis Christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novæ et maleficæ."* —"The Christians, a set of men of a new and mischievous (or magical) superstition, were punished."

Since it is not mentioned *here* that the burning of the city was the pretence of the punishment of the Christians, or that they were the Christians of Rome who alone suffered, it is probable that Suetonius refers to some more general persecution than the short and occasional one which Tacitus describes.

Juvenal, a writer of the same age with the two former, and intending, it should seem, to commemorate the cruelties exercised under Nero's government, has the following lines:†

> "Pone Tigellinum, tædâ lucebis in illâ,
> Quâ stantes ardent, qui fixo gutture fumant,
> Et latum mediâ sulcum deducit‡ arenâ.

"Describe Tigellinus (a creature of Nero,) and you shall suffer the same punishment with those who stand burning in their own flame and smoke, their head being held up by a stake fixed to their chin, till they make a long stream of blood and melted sulphur on the ground."

If this passage were considered by itself, the subject of allusion might be doubtful; but when connected with the testimony of Suetonius, as to the actual punishment of the Christians by Nero, and with the account given by Tacitus of the *species* of punishment which they were made to undergo, I think it sufficiently probable, that these were the executions to which the poet refers.

These things, as has already been observed, took place within thirty-one years after Christ's death, that is, according to the course of nature, in the life-time, probably, of some of the apostles, and certainly in the life-time of those who were converted by the apostles, or who were converted in their time. If then the Founder of the religion was put to death in the execution of his design; if the first race of converts to the religion, many of them, suffered the greatest extremities for their profession; it is hardly credible, that those who came *between* the two, who were companions of the Author of the institution during his life, and the teachers and propagators of the institution after his death, could go about their undertaking with ease and safety.

* Suet. Nero. cap. 16. † Sat. i. ver. 155.
‡ Forsan "deducis."

The testimony of the younger Pliny belongs to a later period; for although he was contemporary with Tacitus and Suetonius, yet his account does not, like theirs, go back to the transactions of Nero's reign, but is confined to the affairs of his own time. His celebrated letter to Trajan was written about seventy years after Christ's death; and the information to be drawn from it, so far as it is connected with our argument, relates principally to two points; first, to the *number* of Christians in Bithynia and Pontus, which was so considerable as to induce the governor of these provinces to speak of them in the following terms; "Multi, omnis ætatis, utriusque sexus etiam;—neque enim civitates tantum, sed vicos etiam et agros, superstitionis istius contagio pervagata est." "There are many of every age and of both sexes; nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but smaller towns also, and the open country." Great exertions must have been used by the preachers of Christianity to produce this state of things within this time. Secondly, to a point which has been already noticed, and which I think of importance to be observed, namely, the sufferings to which Christians were exposed, *without* any public persecution being denounced against them by sovereign authority. For, from Pliny's doubt how he was to act, his silence concerning any subsisting law on the subject, his requesting the emperor's rescript, and the emperor, agreeably to his request propounding a rule for his direction, without reference to any prior rule, it may be inferred, that there was, at that time, no public edict in force against the Christians. Yet from this same epistle of Pliny it appears, "that accusations, trials, and examinations, were and had been, going on against them in the provinces over which he presided; that schedules were delivered by anonymous informers, containing the names of persons who were suspected of holding or of favouring the religion; that, in consequence of these informations, many had been apprehended, of whom some boldly avowed their profession, and died in the cause; others denied that they were Christians; others, acknowledging that they had once been Christians, declared that they had long ceased to be such." All which demonstrates, that the profession of Christianity was at that time (in that country at least) attended with fear and danger: and yet this took place without any edict from the Roman sovereign, commanding or authorising the persecution of Christians. This observation is further confirmed by a rescript of Adrian to Minucius Fundanus, the proconsul of Asia:* from which rescript it appears that the custom of the people of Asia was to proceed against the Christians with tumult and uproar. This disorderly practice, I say, is recognised in the edict, because the emperor enjoins, that, for the future, if the Christians were guilty, they should be legally brought to trial, and not be pursued by importunity and clamour.

Martial wrote a few years before the younger Pliny: and, as his manner was, made the sufferings of the Christians the subject of his ridicule.†

* Lard. Heath. Test. vol. ii. p. 110.

† In matutinâ nuper spectatus arena
Mucius, imposuit qui sua membra focis,
Si patiens fortisque tibi durusque videtur,
Abderitanæ pectora plebis habes;
Nam cum dicatur, tunicâ præsente molestâ,
Ure ‡ manum: plus est dicere, Non facio.

‡ Forsan "thure manum."

Nothing, however, could show the notoriety of the fact with more certainty than this does. Martial's testimony, as well indeed as Pliny's, goes also to another point, viz. that the deaths of these men were martyrdoms in the strictest sense, that is to say, were so voluntary, that it was in their power, at the time of pronouncing the sentence, to have averted the execution by consenting to join in heathen sacrifices.

The constancy, and by consequence the sufferings of the Christians of this period, is also referred to by Epictetus, who imputes their intrepidity to madness, or to a kind of fashion or habit, and about fifty years afterwards, by Marcus Aurelius, who ascribes it to obstinacy. "Is it possible (Epictetus asks) that a man may arrive at this temper, and become indifferent to those things from madness or from habit, *as the Galileans?*"* "Let this preparation of the mind (to die) arise from its own judgment, and not from obstinacy *like the Christians.*"†

CHAPTER III.

There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

Of the primitive condition of Christianity, a distant only and general view can be acquired from heathen writers. It is in our own books that the detail and interior of the transaction must be sought for. And this is nothing different from what might be expected. Who would write a history of Christianity, but a Christian? Who was likely to record the travels, sufferings, labours, or successes of the apostles, but one of their own number, or of their followers? Now these books come up in their accounts to the full extent of the proposition which we maintain. We have four histories of Jesus Christ. We have a history taking up the narrative from his death, and carrying on an account of the propagation of the religion, and of some of the most eminent persons engaged in it, for a space of nearly thirty years. We have, what some may think still more original, a collection of letters, written by certain principal agents in the business, upon the business, and in the midst of their concern and connexion with it. And we have these writings severally attesting the point which we contend for, viz. the sufferings of the witnesses of the history, and attesting it in every variety of form in which it can be conceived to appear: directly and indirectly, expressly and incidentally, by assertion, recital, and allusion, by narratives of facts, and by arguments and discourses built upon these facts, either referring to them, or necessarily presupposing them.

I remark this variety, because, in examining ancient records, or indeed any species of testimony, it is, in my opinion, of the greatest importance to attend to the information or grounds of argument which are *casually* and *undesignedly* disclosed; forasmuch as this species of proof is, of all others, the least liable to be corrupted by fraud or misrepresentation.

I may be allowed therefore, in the inquiry which is now before us, to suggest some conclusion of this sort, as preparatory to more direct testimony.

1. Our books relate, that Jesus Christ, the founder of the religion, was, in consequence of his undertaking, put to death, as a malefactor, at Jerusalem. This point at least will be granted, because it is no more than what Tacitus has recorded. They then proceed to tell us, that the religion was, *notwithstanding*, set forth at this same city of Jerusalem, propagated thence throughout Judea, and afterwards preached in other parts of the Roman empire. These points also are fully confirmed by Tacitus, who informs us, that the religion, after a short check, broke out again in the country where it took its rise; that it not only spread throughout Judea, but had reached Rome, and that it had there great multitudes of converts; and all this within thirty years after its commencement. Now these facts afford a strong inference in behalf of the proposition which we maintain. What could the disciples of Christ expect for themselves when they saw their Master put to death? Could they hope to escape the dangers in which he had perished? If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you, was the warning of common sense. With this example before their eyes, they could not be without a full sense of the peril of their future enterprise.

2. Secondly, all the histories agree in representing Christ as foretelling the persecution of his followers:—

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."*

"When affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended."†

"They shall lay hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake:—and ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolks and friends, and some of you shall they cause to be put to death."‡

"The time cometh, that he that killeth you, will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them."§

I am not entitled to argue from these passages, that Christ actually did foretell these events, and that they did accordingly come to pass; because that would be at once to assume the truth of the religion: but I am entitled to contend, that one side or other of the following disjunction is true; either that the Evangelists have delivered what Christ really spoke, and that the event corresponded with the prediction; or that they put the prediction into Christ's mouth, because, at the time of writing the history, the event had turned out so to be: for, the only two remaining suppositions appear in the highest degree incredible; which are, either

* Epict. l. iv. c. 7. † Marc. Aur. Med. l. xi. c. 3.

* Mat. xxiv. 9.
† Mark iv. 17. See also chap. x. 30.
‡ Luke xxi. 12—16. See also chap. xi. 49.
§ John xvi. 4 See also chap. xv. 20; xvi. 33.

that Christ filled the minds of his followers with fears and apprehensions, without any reason or authority for what he said, and contrary to the truth of the case; or that, although Christ had never foretold any such thing, and the event would have contradicted him if he had, yet historians who lived in the age when the event was known, falsely, as well as officiously, ascribed these words to him.

3. Thirdly, these books abound with exhortations to patience, and with topics of comfort under distress.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."*

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body;—knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.—For which cause we faint not; but, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."†

"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."‡

"Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used; for ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves, that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."§

"So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure. Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom for which ye also suffer."‖

We rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope."¶

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings. —Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithfulCreator."**

What could all these texts mean, if there was nothing in the circumstances of the times which required patience,—which called for the exercise of constancy and resolution? Or will it be pretended that these exhortations (which, let it be observed, come not from one author, but from many) were put in, merely to induce a belief in after-ages, that the Christians were exposed to dangers which they were not exposed to, or underwent sufferings which they did not undergo? If these books belong to the age to which they lay claim, and in which age, whether genuine or spurious, they certainly did appear, this supposition cannot be maintained for a moment; because I think it impossible to believe, that passages, which must be deemed not only unintelligible, but false, by the persons into whose hands the books upon their publication were to come, should nevertheless be inserted, for the purpose of producing an effect upon remote generations. In forgeries which do not appear till many ages after that to which they pretend to belong, it is possible that some contrivance of that sort may take place; but in no others can it be attempted.

* Rom. viii. 35—37.
† 2 Cor. iv. 8—10. 14. 16, 17.
‡ James v. 10, 11.
§ Heb. x. 32—36.
‖ 2 Thess. i. 4, 5.
¶ Rom. v. 3, 4.
** 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. 19.

CHAPTER IV.

There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

The account of the treatment of the religion, and of the exertions of its first preachers, as stated in our Scriptures (not in a professed history of persecutions, or in the connected manner in which I am about to recite it, but dispersedly and occasionally, in the course of a mixed general history, which circumstance alone negatives the supposition of any fraudulent design,) is the following: "That the Founder of Christianity, from the commencement of his ministry to the time of his violent death, employed himself wholly in publishing the institution in Judea and Galilee; that, in order to assist him in this purpose, he made choice out of the number of his followers, of twelve persons, who might accompany him as he travelled from place to place; that, except a short absence upon a journey in which he sent them, two by two, to announce his mission, and one of a few days, when they went before him to Jerusalem, these persons were steadily and constantly attending upon him; that they were with him at Jerusalem when he was apprehended and put to death; and that they were commissioned by him, when his own ministry was concluded, to publish his Gospel, and collect disciples to it from all countries of the world." The account then proceeds to state, "that a few days after his departure, these persons, with some of his relations, and some who had regularly frequented their society, assembled at Jerusalem; that, considering the office of preaching the religion as now devolved upon them, and one of their number having deserted the cause, and, repenting of his perfidy, having destroyed himself, they proceeded to elect another into his place, and that they

were careful to make their election out of the number of those who had accompanied their Master from the first to the last, in order, as they alleged, that he might be a witness, together with themselves, of the principal facts which they were about to produce and relate concerning him;* that they began their work at Jerusalem by publicly asserting that this Jesus, whom the rulers and inhabitants of that place had so lately crucified, was, in truth, the person in whom all their prophecies and long expectations terminated; that he had been sent amongst them by God; and that he was appointed by God the future judge of the human species; that all who were solicitous to secure to themselves happiness after death, ought to receive him as such, and to make profession of their belief, by being baptized in his name."† The history goes on to relate, "that considerable numbers accepted this proposal, and that they who did so, formed amongst themselves a strict union and society;‡ that the attention of the Jewish government being soon drawn upon them, two of the principal persons of the twelve, and who also had lived most intimately and constantly with the Founder of the religion, were seized as they were discoursing to the people in the temple; that, after being kept all night in prison, they were brought the next day before an assembly composed of the chief persons of the Jewish magistracy and priesthood; that this assembly, after some consultation, found nothing, at that time, better to be done towards suppressing the growth of the sect, than to threaten their prisoners with punishment if they persisted; that these men, after expressing, in decent but firm language, the obligation under which they considered themselves to be, to declare what they knew, 'to speak the things which they had seen and heard,' returned from the council, and reported what had passed to their companions; that this report, whilst it apprized them of the danger of their situation and undertaking, had no other effect upon their conduct than to produce in them a general resolution to persevere, and an earnest prayer to God to furnish them with assistance, and to inspire them with fortitude, proportioned to the increasing exigency of the service."§ A very short time after this, we read "that all the twelve apostles were seized and cast into prison;‖ that being brought a second time before the Jewish Sanhedrim, they were upbraided with their disobedience to the injunction which had been laid upon them, and beaten for their contumacy; that, being charged once more to desist, they were suffered to depart; that however they neither quitted Jerusalem, nor ceased from preaching, both daily in the temple, and from house to house;¶ and that the twelve considered themselves as so entirely and exclusively devoted to this office, that they now transferred what may be called the temporal affairs of the society to other hands."**

Hitherto the preachers of the new religion seem to have had the common people on their side; which is assigned as the reason why the Jewish rulers did not, at this time, think it prudent to proceed to greater extremities. It was not long, however, before the enemies of the institution found means to represent it to the people as tending to subvert their law, degrade their lawgiver, and dishonour their temple.* And these insinuations were dispersed with so much success, as to induce the people to join with their superiors in the stoning of a very active member of the new community.

The death of this man was the signal of a general persecution, the activity of which may be judged of from one anecdote of the time:—"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison."† This persecution raged at Jerusalem with so much fury, as to drive most of the new converts out of the place, except the twelve apostles.‡ The converts, thus "scattered abroad," preached the religion wherever they came; and their preaching was, in effect, the preaching of the *twelve;* for it was so far carried on in concert and correspondence with *them*, that when they heard of the success of their emissaries in a particular country, they sent two of their number to the place, to complete and confirm the mission.

An event now took place, of great importance in the future history of the religion. The persecution§ which had begun at Jerusalem, followed the Christians to other cities, in which the authority of the Jewish Sanhedrim over those of their own nation was allowed to be exercised. A young man, who had signalized himself by his hostility to the profession, and had procured a commission from the council at Jerusalem to seize any converted Jews whom he might find at Damascus, suddenly became a proselyte to the religion which he was going about to extirpate. The new convert not only shared, on this extraordinary change, the fate of his companions, but brought upon himself a double measure of enmity from the party which he had left. The Jews at Damascus, on his return to that city, watched the gates night and day, with so much diligence, that he escaped from their hands only by being let down in a basket by the wall. Nor did he find himself in greater safety at Jerusalem, whither he immediately repaired.—Attempts were there also soon set on foot to destroy him; from the danger

* Acts i. 21, 22. † Acts xi. ‡ Acts iv. 32.
§ Acts iv. ‖ Acts v. 18. ¶ Acts v. 42

** I do not know that it has ever been insinuated, that the Christian mission, in the hands of the apostles, was a scheme for making a fortune, or for getting money.—But it may nevertheless be fit to remark upon this passage of their history, how perfectly free they appear to have been from any pecuniary or interested views whatever. The most tempting opportunity which occurred, of making a gain of their converts, was by the custody and management of the public funds, when some of the richer members, intending to contribute their fortunes to the common support of the society, sold their possessions, and laid down the prices at the apostles' feet. Yet, so insensible, or undesirous, were they of the advantage which that confidence afforded, that we find they very soon disposed of the trust, by putting it into the hands, not of nominees of their own, but of stewards formally elected for the purpose by the society at large.

We may add also, that this excess of generosity, which cast private property into the public stock, was so far from being required by the apostles, or imposed as a law of Christianity, that Peter reminds Ananias that he had been guilty, in his behaviour, of an officious and voluntary prevarication; "for whilst," says he, "thy estate remained unsold, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?"

* Acts vi. 12. † Acts viii. 3.

‡ Acts viii. 1. "And they were *all* scattered abroad:" but the term "all" is not, I think, to be taken strictly as denoting more than the *generality;* in like manner as in Acts ix. 35 "And *all* that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord."

§ Acts ix.

of which he was preserved by being sent away to Cilicia, his native country.

For some reason, not mentioned, perhaps not known, but probably connected with the civil history of the Jews, or with some danger* which engrossed the public attention, an intermission about this time took place in the sufferings of the Christians. This happened, at the most, only seven or eight, perhaps only three or four, years after Christ's death.—Within which period, and notwithstanding that the late persecution occupied part of it, churches, or societies of believers, had been formed in all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria; for we read that the churches in these countries "had *now rest*, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."† The original preachers of the religion did not remit their labours or activity during this season of quietness; for we find one, and he a very principal person among them, passing throughout all quarters. We find also those who had been before expelled from Jerusalem by the persecution which raged there, travelling as far as Phœnice, Cyprus, and Antioch;‡ and, lastly, we find Jerusalem again in the centre of the mission, the place whither the preachers returned from their several excursions, where they reported the conduct and effects of their ministry, where questions of public concern were canvassed and settled, whence directions were sought, and teachers sent forth.

The time of this tranquillity did not, however, continue long. Herod Agrippa, who had lately acceded to the government of Judea, "stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the church."§ He began his cruelty by beheading one of the twelve original apostles, a kinsman and constant companion of the Founder of the religion. Perceiving that this execution gratified the Jews, he proceeded to seize, in order to put to death, another of the number,—and him, like the former, associated with Christ during his life, and eminently active in the service since his death. This man was however delivered from prison, as the account states,‖ miraculously, and made his escape from Jerusalem.

These things are related, not in the general terms under which, in giving the outlines of the history, we have here mentioned them, but with the utmost particularity of names, persons, places, and circumstances; and, what is deserving of notice, without the smallest discoverable propensity in the historian to magnify the fortitude, or exaggerate the sufferings of his party. When they fled for their lives, he tells us. When the churches had rest, he remarks it. When the people took their part, he does not leave it without notice. When the apostles were carried a second time before the Sanhedrim, he is careful to observe that they were brought without violence. When milder counsels were suggested, he gives us the author of the advice, and the speech which contained it. When, in consequence of this advice, the rulers contented themselves with threatening the apostles, and commanding them to be beaten with stripes, without urging at that time the persecution further, the historian candidly and distinctly records their forbearance. When, therefore, in other instances, he states heavier persecutions, or actual martyrdoms, it is reasonable to believe that he states them because they were true, and not from any wish to aggravate, in his account, the sufferings which Christians sustained, or to extol, more than it deserved, their patience under them.

Our history now pursues a narrower path. Leaving the rest of the apostles, and the original associates of Christ, engaged in the propagation of the new faith (and who there is not the least reason to believe abated in their diligence or courage,) the narrative proceeds with the separate memoirs of that eminent teacher, whose extraordinary and sudden conversion to the religion, and corresponding change of conduct, had before been circumstantially described. This person, in conjunction with another, who appeared among the earlier members of the society at Jerusalem, and amongst the immediate adherents* of the twelve apostles, set out from Antioch upon the express business of carrying the new religion through the various provinces of the Lesser Asia.† During this expedition, we find that, in almost every place to which they came, their persons were insulted, and their lives endangered. After being expelled from Antioch in Pisidia, they repaired to Iconium.‡ At Iconium, an attempt was made to stone them; at Lystra, whither they fled from Iconium, one of them actually was stoned, and drawn out of the city for dead.§ These two men, though not themselves original apostles, were acting in connexion and conjunction with the original apostles; for after the completion of their journey, being sent on a particular commission to Jerusalem, they there related to the apostles‖ and elders the events and success of their ministry, and were, in return, recommended by them to the churches, "as men who had hazarded their lives in the cause."

The treatment which they had experienced in the first progress, did not deter them from preparing for a second. Upon a dispute, however, arising between them, but not connected with the common subject of their labours, they acted as wise and sincere men would act; they did not retire in disgust from the service in which they were engaged, but, each devoting his endeavours to the advancement of the religion, they parted from one another, and set forwards upon separate routes. The history goes along with one of them; and the second enterprise to him was attended with the same dangers and persecutions as both had met with in the first. The apostle's travels hitherto had been confined to Asia. He now crosses, for the first time, the Ægean sea, and carries with him, amongst others, the person whose accounts supply the information we are stating.¶ The first place in Greece at which he appears to have stopped, was Philippi in Macedonia. Here himself and one of his companions were cruelly whipped, cast into prison, and kept there under the most rigorous custody, being thrust, whilst yet smarting with their wounds, into the inner

* Dr. Lardner (in which he is followed also by Dr. Benson) ascribes this cessation of the persecution of the Christians to the attempt of Caligula to set up his own statue in the temple of Jerusalem, and to the consternation thereby excited in the minds of the Jewish people: which consternation for a season suspended every other contest.

† Acts ix. 31. ‡ Acts xi. 19.
§ Acts xii. 1. ‖ Acts xii. 3—17.

* Acts iv. 36. † Acts xiii. 2.
‡ Acts xiii. 51. § Acts xiv. 19.
‖ Acts xv. 12—26. ¶ Acts xvi. 11.

dungeon, and their feet made fast in the stocks.* Notwithstanding this unequivocal specimen of the usage which they had to look for in that country, they went forward in the execution of their errand. After passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica; in which city, the house in which they lodged was assailed by a party of their enemies, in order to bring them out to the populace. And when, fortunately for their preservation, they were not found at home, the master of the house was dragged before the magistrate for admitting them within his doors.† Their reception at the next city was something better: but neither had they continued long before their turbulent adversaries, the Jews, excited against them such commotions amongst the inhabitants, as obliged the apostle to make his escape by a private journey to Athens.‡ The extremity of the progress was Corinth. His abode in this city, for some time, seems to have been without molestation. At length, however, the Jews found means to stir up an insurrection against him, and to bring him before the tribunal of the Roman president.§ It was to the contempt which that magistrate entertained for the Jews and their controversies, of which he accounted Christianity to be one, that our apostle owed his deliverance.‖

This indefatigable teacher, after leaving Corinth, returned by Ephesus into Syria; and again visited Jerusalem, and the society of Christians in that city, which, as hath been repeatedly observed, still continued the centre of the mission.¶ It suited not, however, with the activity of his zeal to remain long at Jerusalem. We find him going thence to Antioch, and, after some stay there, traversing once more the northern provinces of Asia Minor.** This progress ended at Ephesus; in which city, the apostle continued in the daily exercise of his ministry two years, and until his success, at length, excited the apprehensions of those who were interested in the support of the national worship. Their clamour produced a tumult, in which he had nearly lost his life.†† Undismayed, however, by the dangers to which he saw himself exposed, he was driven from Ephesus only to renew his labours in Greece. After passing over Macedonia, he thence proceeded to his former station at Corinth.‡‡ When he had formed his design of returning by a direct course from Corinth into Syria, he was compelled by a conspiracy of the Jews, who were prepared to intercept him on his way, to trace back his steps through Macedonia to Philippi, and thence to take shipping into Asia. Along the coast of Asia, he pursued his voyage with all the expedition he could command, in order to reach Jerusalem against the feast of Pentecost.§§ His reception at Jerusalem was of a piece with the usage he had experienced from the Jews in other places. He had been only a few days in that city, when the populace, instigated by some of his old opponents in Asia, who attended this feast, seized him in the temple, forced him out of it, and were ready immediately to have destroyed him, had not the sudden presence of the Roman guard rescued him out of their hands.* The officer, however, who had thus seasonably interposed, acted from his care of the public peace, with the preservation of which he was charged, and not from any favour to the apostle, or indeed any disposition to exercise either justice or humanity towards him: for he had no sooner secured his person in the fortress, than he was proceeding to examine him by torture.†

From this time to the conclusion of the history, the apostle remains in public custody of the Roman government. After escaping assassination by a fortunate discovery of the plot, and delivering himself from the influence of his enemies by an appeal to the audience of the emperor,‡ he was sent, but not until he had suffered two years' imprisonment, to Rome.§ He reached Italy, after a tedious voyage, and after encountering in his passage the perils of a desperate shipwreck.‖ But although still a prisoner, and his fate still depending, neither the various and long continued sufferings which he had undergone, nor the danger of his present situation, deterred him from persisting in preaching the religion; for the historian closes the account by telling us, that, for two years, he received all that came unto him in his own hired house, where he was permitted to dwell with a soldier that guarded him, "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence."

Now the historian from whom we have drawn this account, in the part of his narrative which relates to Saint Paul, is supported by the strongest corroborating testimony that a history can receive. We are in possession of letters written by Saint Paul himself upon the subject of his ministry, and either written during the period which the history comprises, or if written afterwards, reciting and referring to the transactions of that period. These letters, without borrowing from the history, or the history from them, unintentionally confirm the account which the history delivers, in a great variety of particulars. What belongs to our present purpose is the description exhibited of the apostle's sufferings: and the representation, given in the history, of the dangers and distresses which he underwent, not only agrees, in general, with the language which he himself uses whenever he speaks of his life or ministry, but is also, in many instances, attested by a specific correspondency of time, place, and order of events. If the historian put down in his narrative, that at Philippi, the apostle "was beaten with many stripes, cast into prison, and there treated with rigour and indignity;"¶ we find him, in a letter to a neighbouring church,** reminding his converts, that, "after he had suffered before, and was shamefully entreated at Philippi, he was bold, nevertheless, to speak unto them (to whose city he next came) the Gospel of God." If the history relate,†† that, at Thessalonica, the house in which the apostle was lodged, when he first came to that place, was assaulted by the populace, and the master of it dragged before the magistrate for admitting such a guest within his doors; the apostle, in his letter to the Christians of Thessalonica, calls to their remembrance "how they had received the Gospel in much affliction."‡‡ If the history deliver an ac-

* Acts xvi. 23, 24. 33.
† Acts xvii. 1—5.
‡ Acts xvii. 13.
§ Acts xviii. 12.
‖ Acts xviii. 15.
¶ Acts xviii. 22.
** Acts xviii. 23.
†† Acts xix. 1. 9, 10.
‡‡ Acts xx. 1, 2.
§§ Acts xx. 16.

* Acts xxi. 27—33.
† Acts xxii. 24.
‡ Acts xxv. 9. 11.
§ Acts xxiv. 27.
‖ Acts xxvii.
¶ Acts xvi. 23, 24.
** 1 Thess. ii. 2.
†† Acts xvii. 5.
‡‡ 1 Thess. i. 6.

count of an insurrection at Ephesus, which had nearly cost the apostle his life; we have the apostle himself, in a letter written a short time after his departure from that city, describing his despair, and returning thanks for his deliverance.* If the history inform us, that the apostle was expelled from Antioch in Pisidia, attempted to be stoned at Iconium, and actually stoned at Lystra; there is preserved a letter from him to a favourite convert, whom, as the same history tells us, he first met with in these parts; in which letter he appeals to that disciple's knowledge "of the persecutions which befell him at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra."† If the history make the apostle, in his speech to the Ephesian elders, remind them, as one proof of the disinterestedness of his views, that, to their knowledge, he had supplied his own and the necessities of his companions by personal labour;‡ we find the same apostle, in a letter written during his residence at Ephesus, asserting of himself, "that even to that hour he laboured, working with his own hands."§

These coincidences, together with many relative to other parts of the apostle's history, and *all* drawn from independent sources, not only confirm the truth of the account, in the particular points as to which they are observed, but add much to the credit of the narrative in all its parts: and support the author's profession of being a contemporary of the person whose history he writes, and, throughout a material portion of his narrative, a companion.

What the epistles of the apostles declare of the suffering state of Christianity, the writings which remain of their companions and immediate followers, expressly confirm.

Clement, who is honourably mentioned by Saint Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians,‖ hath left us his attestation to this point, in the following words: "Let us take (says he) the examples of our own age. Through zeal and envy, the most faithful and righteous pillars of the church have been persecuted even to the most grievous deaths. Let us set before our eyes *the holy apostles*. Peter, by unjust envy, underwent, not one or two, but many sufferings; till at last, being martyred, he went to the place of glory that was due unto him. For the same cause did Paul, in like manner, receive the reward of his patience. Seven times he was in bonds; he was whipt, was stoned; he preached both in the East and in the West, leaving behind him the glorious report of his faith; and so having taught the whole world righteousness, and for that end travelled even unto the utmost bounds of the West, he at last suffered martyrdom by the command of the governors, and departed out of the world, and went unto his holy place, being become a most eminent pattern of patience unto all ages. To these holy apostles were joined a very great number of others, who, having through envy undergone, in like manner, many pains and torments, have left a glorious example to us. For this, not only men, but women have been persecuted; and, having suffered very grievous and cruel punishments, have finished the course of their faith with firmness."¶

Hermas, saluted by Saint Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, in a piece very little connected with historical recitals, thus speaks: "Such as have believed and suffered death for the name of Christ, and have endured with a ready mind, and have given up their lives with all their hearts."*

Polycarp, the disciple of John (though all that remains of his works be a very short epistle,) has not left this subject unnoticed. "I exhort (says he) all of you, that ye obey the word of righteousness, and exercise all patience, which ye have seen set forth before your eyes, not only in the blessed Ignatius, and Lorimus, and Rufus, but in others among yourselves, and in *Paul himself and the rest of the apostles*; being confident in this, that all these have not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness; and are gone to the place that was due to them from the Lord, with whom also they suffered. For they loved not this present world, but Him who died, and was raised again by God for us."†

Ignatius, the contemporary of Polycarp, recognises the same topic, briefly indeed, but positively and precisely. "For this cause, (*i. e.* having felt and handled Christ's body after his resurrection, and being convinced, as Ignatius expresses it, both by his flesh and spirit,) they (*i. e.* Peter, and those who were present with Peter at Christ's appearance) despised death, and were found to be above it."‡

Would the reader know what a persecution in these days was, I would refer him to a circular letter, written by the church of Smyrna soon after the death of Polycarp, who, it will be remembered, had lived with Saint John; and which letter is entitled a relation of that bishop's martyrdom. "Tho sufferings (say they) of all the other martyrs were blessed and generous, which they underwent according to the will of God. For so it becomes us, who are more religious than others, to ascribe the power and ordering of all things unto him. And indeed who can choose but admire the greatness of their minds, and that admirable patience and love of their Master, which then appeared in them? Who, when they were so flayed with whipping, that the frame and structure of their bodies were laid open to their very inward veins and arteries, nevertheless endured it. In like manner, those who were condemned to the beasts, and kept a long time in prison, underwent many cruel torments, being forced to lie upon sharp spikes laid under their bodies, and tormented with divers other sorts of punishments; that so, if it were possible, the tyrant by the length of their sufferings, might have brought them to deny Christ."§

CHAPTER V.

There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

* Acts xix. 2 Cor. 8—10.
† Acts xiii. 50; xiv. 5. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 10, 11.
‡ Acts xx. 34. § 1 Cor. iv. 11, 12.
‖ Philipp. iv. 3.
¶ Clem. ad Cor. c. v, vi. Abp. Wake's Trans.

* Shepherd of Hermas, c. xxviii.
† Pol. ad Phil. c. ix. ‡ 19 Ep. Smyr. c. iii.
§ Rel. Mor. Pol. c. ii.

On the history, of which the last chapter contains an abstract, there are a few observations which it may be proper to make, by way of applying its testimony to the particular propositions for which we contend.

I. Although our Scripture history leaves the general account of the apostles in an early part of the narrative, and proceeds with the separate account of one particular apostle, yet the information which it delivers so far extends to the rest, as it shows *the nature of the service*. When we see one apostle suffering persecution in the discharge of his commission, we shall not believe, without evidence, that the same office could, at the same time, be attended with ease and safety to others. And this fair and reasonable inference is confirmed by the direct attestation of the letters, to which we have so often referred. The writer of these letters not only alludes, in numerous passages, to his own sufferings, but speaks of the rest of the apostles as enduring like sufferings with himself. "I think that God hath set forth *us the apostles* last, as it were, appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men;—even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and as the offscouring of all things unto this day." * Add to which, that in the short account that is given of the other apostles in the former part of the history, and within the short period which that account comprises, we find, first, two of them seized, imprisoned, brought before the Sanhedrim, and threatened with further punishment; † then, the whole number imprisoned and beaten; ‡ soon afterwards, one of their adherents stoned to death, and so hot a persecution raised against the sect, as to drive most of them out of the place; a short time only succeeding, before one of the twelve was beheaded, and another sentenced to the same fate; and all this passing in the single city of Jerusalem, and within ten years after the Founder's death, and the commencement of the institution.

II. We take no credit at present for the miraculous part of the narrative, nor do we insist upon the correctness of single passages of it. If the whole story be not a novel, a romance; the whole action a dream; if Peter and James, and Paul, and the rest of the apostles mentioned in the account, be not all imaginary persons; if their letters be not all forgeries, and, what is more, forgeries of names and characters which never existed; then is there evidence in our hands sufficient to support the only fact we contend for (and which, I repeat again, is in itself highly probable,) that the original followers of Jesus Christ exerted great endeavours to propagate his religion, and underwent great labours, dangers, and sufferings, in consequence of their undertaking.

III. The general reality of the apostolic history is strongly confirmed by the consideration, that it, in truth, does no more than assign adequate causes for effects which certainly were produced, and describe consequences naturally resulting from situations which certainly existed. The *effects* were certainly these, of which this history sets forth the cause, and origin, and progress. It is acknowledged on all hands, because it is recorded by other testimony than that of the Christians themselves, that the religion began to prevail at that time, and in that country. It is very difficult to conceive how it could begin, or prevail at all, without the exertions of the Founder and his followers, in propagating the new persuasion. The history now in our hands describes these exertions, the persons employed, the means and endeavours made use of, and the labours undertaken in the prosecution of this purpose. Again, the treatment which the history represents the first propagators of the religion to have experienced, was no other than what naturally resulted from the situation in which they were confessedly placed. It is admitted that the religion was adverse, in a great degree to the reigning opinions, and to the hopes and wishes of the nation to which it was first introduced; and that it overthrew, so far as it was received, the established theology and worship of every other country. We cannot feel much reluctance in believing that, when the messengers of such a system went about not only publishing their opinions, but collecting proselytes, and forming regular societies of proselytes, they should meet with opposition in their attempts, or that this opposition should sometimes proceed to fatal extremities. Our history details examples of this opposition, and of the sufferings and dangers which the emissaries of the religion underwent, perfectly agreeable to what might reasonably be expected, from the nature of their undertaking, compared with the character of the age and country in which it was carried on.

IV. The records before us supply evidence of what formed another member of our general proposition, and what, as hath already been observed, is highly probable, and almost a necessary consequence of their new profession, viz. that, together with activity and courage in propagating the religion, the primitive followers of Jesus assumed, upon their conversion, a new and peculiar course of private life. Immediately after their Master was withdrawn from them, we hear of their "continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication;" * of their "continuing daily with one accord in the temple;" † of "many being gathered together praying." ‡ We know what strict injunctions were laid upon the converts by their teachers. Wherever they came, the first word of their preaching was, "Repent!" We know that these injunctions obliged them to refrain from many species of licentiousness, which were not, at that time, reputed criminal. We know the rules of purity, and the maxims of benevolence, which Christians read in their books; concerning which rules, it is enough to observe, that, if they were, I will not say completely obeyed, but in any degree regarded, they would produce a system of conduct, and what is more difficult to preserve, a disposition of mind, and a regulation of affections, different from any thing to which they had hitherto been accustomed, and different from what they would see in others. The change and distinction of manners, which resulted from their new character, is perpetually referred to in the letters of their teachers. "And you hath he quickened who *were* dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in

* 1 Cor. iv. 9, *et seq.* † Acts iv. 3. 21.
‡ Acts v. 18. 40.

* Acts i. 14. † Acts ii. 46. ‡ Acts xii. 12.

times past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*—"For the *time past of our life* may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries; *wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot.*"† Saint Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, after enumerating, as his manner was, a catalogue of vicious characters, adds, "Such *were* some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified."‡ In like manner, and alluding to the same change of practices and sentiments, he asks the Roman Christians, "what fruit they had in those things, whereof they are *now* ashamed?"§ The phrases which the same writer employs to describe the moral condition of Christians, compared with their condition before they became Christians, such as "newness of life," being "freed from sin," being "dead to sin;" "the destruction of the body of sin, that, *for the future*, they should not serve sin;" "children of light and of the day," as opposed to "children of darkness and of the night;" "not sleeping as others;" imply, at least, a new system of obligation, and, probably, a new series of conduct, commencing with their conversion.

The testimony which Pliny bears to the behaviour of the new sect in his time, and which testimony comes not more than fifty years after that of St. Paul, is very applicable to the subject under consideration. The character which this writer gives of the Christians of that age, and which was drawn from a pretty accurate inquiry, because he considered their moral principles as the point in which the magistrate was interested, is as follows:—He tells the emperor, "that some of those who had relinquished the society, or who, to save themselves, pretended that they had relinquished it, affirmed that they were wont to meet together, on a stated day, before it was light, and sang among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as a god; and to bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but that they would not be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery; that they would never falsify their word, or deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it." This proves that a morality, more pure and strict than was ordinary, prevailed at that time in Christian societies. And to me it appears, that we are authorized to carry this testimony back to the age of the apostles: because it is not probable that the immediate hearers and disciples of Christ were more relaxed than their successors in Pliny's time, or the missionaries of the religion, than those whom they taught.

CHAPTER VI.

There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

When we consider, first, the prevalency of the religion at this hour; secondly, the only credible account which can be given of its origin, viz. the activity of the Founder and his associates; thirdly, the opposition which that activity must naturally have excited; fourthly, the fate of the Founder of the religion, attested by heathen writers as well as our own; fifthly, the testimony of the same writers to the sufferings of Christians, either contemporary with, or immediately succeeding, the original settlers of the institution; sixthly, predictions of the sufferings of his followers ascribed to the Founder of the religion, which ascription alone proves, either that such predictions were delivered and fulfilled, or that the writers of Christ's life were induced by the event to attribute such predictions to him; seventhly, letters now in our possession, written by some of the principal agents in the transaction, referring expressly to extreme labours, dangers, and sufferings sustained by themselves and their companions; lastly, a history purporting to be written by a fellow-traveller of one of the new teachers, and, by its unsophisticated correspondency with letters of that person still extant, proving itself to be written by some one well acquainted with the subject of the narrative, which history contains accounts of travels, persecutions, and martyrdoms, answering to what the former reasons lead us to expect: when we lay together these considerations, which taken separately, are, I think, correctly, such as I have stated them in the preceding chapters, there cannot much doubt remain upon our minds, but that a number of persons at that time appeared in the world, publicly advancing an extraordinary story, and for the sake of propagating the belief of that story, voluntarily incurring great personal dangers, traversing seas and kingdoms, exerting great industry, and sustaining great extremities of ill usage and persecution. It is also proved, that the same persons, in consequence of their persuasion, or pretended persuasion, of the truth of what they asserted, entered upon a course of life in many respects new and singular.

From the clear and acknowledged parts of the case, I think it to be likewise in the highest degree probable, that the story, for which these persons voluntarily exposed themselves to the fatigues and hardships which they endured, was a *miraculous* story; I mean, that they pretended to miraculous evidence of some kind or other. They had nothing else to stand upon. The designation of the person, that is to say, that Jesus of Nazareth, rather than any other person, was the Messiah, and as such the subject of their ministry, could only be founded upon supernatural tokens attributed to him. Here were no victories, no conquest, no revolutions, no surprising elevation of fortune, no achievements of valour, of strength, or of policy, to appeal to; no discoveries in any arts or science, no great efforts of genius or learning to produce. A Galilean peasant was announced to the world as a divine lawgiver. A young man of mean condition, of a private and simple life, and

* Eph. ii. 1—3. See also Tit. iii. 3. † 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4.
‡ 1 Cor. vi. 11. § Rom. vi. 21.

who had wrought no deliverance for the Jewish nation, was declared to be their Messiah. This, without ascribing to him at the same time some proofs of his mission, (and what other but supernatural proofs could there be?) was too absurd a claim to be either imagined, or attempted, or credited. In whatever degree, or in whatever part, the religion was *argumentative*, when it came to the question, "Is the carpenter's son of Nazareth the person whom we are to receive and obey?" there was nothing but the miracles attributed to him, by which his pretensions could be maintained for a moment. Every controversy and every question must presuppose these; for, however such controversies, when they did arise, might, and naturally would, be discussed upon their own grounds of argumentation, without citing the miraculous evidence which had been asserted to attend the Founder of the religion, (which would have been to enter upon another, and a more general question,) yet we are to bear in mind, that without previously supposing the existence or the pretence of such evidence, there could have been no place for the discussion of the argument at all. Thus, for example, whether the prophecies, which the Jews interpreted to belong to the Messiah, were, or were not applicable to the history of Jesus of Nazareth, was a natural subject of debate in those times; and the debate would proceed, without recurring at every turn to his miracles, because it set out with supposing these; inasmuch as without miraculous marks and tokens, (real or pretended,) or without some such great change effected by his means in the public condition of the country, as might have satisfied the then received interpretation of these prophecies, I do not see how the question could ever have been entertained. Apollos, we read, "mightily convinced the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ;"* but unless Jesus had exhibited some distinction of his person, some proof of supernatural power, the argument from the old Scriptures could have had no place. It had nothing to attach upon. A young man calling himself the Son of God, gathering a crowd about him, and delivering to them lectures of morality, could not have excited so much as a doubt among the Jews, whether he was the object in whom a long series of ancient prophecies terminated, from the completion of which they had formed such magnificent expectations, and expectations of a nature so opposite to what appeared; I mean, no such doubt could exist when they had the whole case before them, when they saw him put to death for his officiousness, and when by his death the evidence concerning him was closed. Again the *effect* of the Messiah's coming, supposing Jesus to have been he, upon Jews, upon Gentiles, upon their relation to each other, upon their acceptance with God, upon their duties and their expectations; his nature, authority, office, and agency; were likely to become subjects of much consideration with the early votaries of the religion, and to occupy their attention and writings. I should not however expect, that in these disquisitions, whether preserved in the form of letters, speeches, or set treatises, frequent or very direct mention of his miracles would occur. Still miraculous evidence lay at the bottom of the argument. In the *primary* question, miraculous pretensions, and miraculous pretensions alone, were what they had to rely upon.

That the original story was miraculous, is very fairly also inferred from the miraculous powers which were laid claim to by the Christians of succeeding ages. If the accounts of these miracles be true, it was a continuation of the same powers; if they be false, it was an *imitation*, I will not say of what had been wrought, but of what had been reported to have been wrought, by those who preceded them. That imitation should follow reality, fiction should be grafted upon truth; that, if miracles were performed at first, miracles should be pretended afterwards; agrees so well with the ordinary course of human affairs, that we can have no great difficulty in believing it. The contrary supposition is very improbable, namely, that miracles should be pretended to, by the followers of the apostles and first emissaries of the religion, when none were pretended to, either in their own persons or that of their Master, by these apostles and emissaries themselves.

* Acts xviii. 28.

CHAPTER VII.

There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

It being then once proved, that the first propagators of the Christian institution did exert activity, and subject themselves to great dangers and sufferings, in consequence and for the sake of an extraordinary, and, I think, we may say, of a miraculous story of some kind or other; the next great question is, Whether the account, which our Scriptures contain, be that story; that which these men delivered, and for which they acted and suffered as they did? This question is, in effect, no other than whether the story which Christians have *now*, be the story which Christians had *then?* And of this the following proofs may be deduced from general considerations, and from considerations prior to any inquiry into the particular reasons and testimonies by which the authority of our histories is supported.

In the first place, there exists no trace or vestige of any other story. It is not, like the death of Cyrus the Great, a competition between opposite accounts, or between the credit of different historians. There is not a document, or scrap of account, either contemporary with the commencement of Christianity, or extant within many ages after that commencement, which assigns a history substantially different from ours. The remote, brief, and incidental notices of the affair, which are found in heathen writers, so far as they do go, go along with us. They bear testimony to these facts:—that the institution originated from Jesus; that the Founder was put to death, as a malefactor, at Jerusalem, by the authority of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate; that the religion nevertheless spread in that city, and throughout Judea; and that it was propagated thence to distant coun-

tries; that the converts were numerous; that they suffered great hardships and injuries for their profession; and that all this took place in the age of the world which our books have assigned. They go on further, to describe the *manners* of Christians in terms perfectly conformable to the accounts extant in our books: that they were wont to assemble on a certain day; that they sang hymns to Christ as to a god; that they bound themselves by an oath not to commit any crime, but to abstain from theft and adultery, to adhere strictly to their promises, and not to deny money deposited in their hands;* that they worshipped him who was crucified in Palestine; that this their first lawgiver had taught them that they were all brethren; that they had a great contempt for the things of this world, and looked upon them as common; that they flew to one another's relief; that they cherished strong hopes of immortality; that they despised death, and surrendered themselves to sufferings.† This is the account of writers who viewed the subject at a great distance; who were uninformed and uninterested about it. It bears the characters of such an account upon the face of it, because it describes effects, namely, the appearance in the world of a new religion, and the conversion of great multitudes to it, without descending, in the smallest degree, to the detail of the transaction upon which it was founded, the interior of the institution, the evidence or arguments offered by those who drew over others to it. Yet still here is no contradiction of our story; no other or different story set up against it: but so far a confirmation of it, as that, in the general points on which the heathen account touches, it agrees with that which we find in our own books.

The same may be observed of the very few Jewish writers, of that and the adjoining period, which have come down to us. Whatever they omit, or whatever difficulties we may find in explaining the omission, they advance no other history of the transaction than that which we acknowledge. Josephus, who wrote his Antiquities, or History of the Jews, about sixty years after the commencement of Christianity, in a passage generally admitted as genuine, makes mention of John under the name of John the Baptist; that he was a preacher of virtue; that he baptized his proselytes; that he was well received by the people; that he was imprisoned and put to death by Herod; and that Herod lived in a criminal cohabitation with Herodias, his brother's wife.‡ In another passage allowed by many, although not without considerable question being moved about it, we hear of "James, the brother of him who was called Jesus, and of his being put to death."* In a third passage, extant in every copy that remains of Josephus's History, but the authenticity of which has nevertheless been long disputed, we have an explicit testimony to the substance of our history in these words:—"At that time lived Jesus, a wise man, if he may be called a man, for he performed many wonderful works. He was a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many Jews and Gentiles. This was the Christ; and when Pilate, at the instigation of the chief men among us, had condemned him to the cross, they who before had conceived an affection for him, did not cease to adhere to him; for, on the third day, he appeared to them alive again, the divine prophets having foretold these and many wonderful things concerning him. And the sect of the Christians, so called from him, subsists to this time."† Whatever become of the controversy concerning the genuineness of this passage; whether Josephus go the whole length of our history, which, if the passage be sincere, he does; or whether he proceed only a very little way with us, which, if the passage be rejected, we confess to be the case; still what we asserted is true, that he gives no other or different history of the subject from ours, no other or different account of the origin of the institution. And I think also that it may with great reason be contended, either that the passage is genuine, or that the silence of Josephus was *designed*. For, although we should lay aside the authority of our own books entirely, yet when Tacitus, who wrote not twenty, perhaps not ten, years after Josephus, in his account of a period in which Josephus was nearly thirty years of age, tells us, that a vast multitude of Christians were condemned at Rome; that they derived their denomination from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death, as a criminal, by the procurator, Pontius Pilate; that the superstition had spread not only over Judea, the source of the evil, but had reached Rome also:—when Suetonius, an historian contemporary with Tacitus, relates that, in the time of Claudius, the Jews were making disturbances at Rome, Christus being their leader; and that, during the reign of Nero, the Christians were punished; under both which emperors, Josephus lived: when Pliny, who wrote his celebrated epistle not more than thirty years after the publication of Josephus's history, found the Christians in such numbers in the province of Bithynia, as to draw from him a complaint, that the contagion had seized cities, towns, and villages, and had so seized them as to produce a general desertion of the public rites; and when, as has already been observed, there is no reason for imagining that the Christians were more numerous in Bithynia than in many other parts of the Roman empire; it cannot, I should suppose, after this, be believed, that the religion, and the transaction upon which it was founded, were too obscure to engage the attention of Josephus, or to obtain a place in his history. Perhaps he did not know how to represent the business, and disposed of his difficulties by passing it over in silence. Eusebius wrote the

* See Pliny's Letter.—Bonnet, in his lively way of expressing himself, says,—"Comparing Pliny's Letter with the account of the Acts, it seems to me that I had not taken up another author, but that I was still reading the historian of that extraordinary society." This is strong: but there is undoubtedly an affinity, and all the affinity that could be expected.

† "It is incredible what expedition they use when any of their friends are known to be in trouble. In a word, they spare nothing upon such an occasion;—for these miserable men have no doubt they shall be immortal and live for ever: therefore they contemn death, and many surrender themselves to sufferings. Moreover, their first lawgiver has taught them that they are all brethren, when once they have turned and renounced the gods of the Greeks, and worship this Master of theirs who was crucified, and engage to live according to his laws. They have also a sovereign contempt for all the things of this world, and look upon them as common."—Lucian de Morte Peregrini, t. i. p. 565. ed. Græv.

‡ Antiq. l. xviii. cap. v. sect. 1, 2.

* Antiq. l. xx. cap. ix. sect. 1.

† Antiq. l. xviii. cap. iii. sect. 3.

life of Constantine, yet omits entirely the most remarkable circumstance in that life, the death of his son Crispus: undoubtedly for the reason here given. The reserve of Josephus upon the subject of Christianity appears also in his passing over the banishment of the Jews by Claudius, which Suetonius, we have seen, has recorded with an express reference to Christ. This is at least as remarkable as his silence about the infants of Bethlehem.* Be, however, the fact, or the cause of the omission in Josephus,† what it may, no other or different history on the subject has been given by him, or is pretended to have been given.

But further; the whole series of Christian writers, from the first age of the institution down to the present, in their discussions, apologies, arguments, and controversies, proceed upon the general story which our Scriptures contain, and upon no other. The main facts, the principal agents, are alike in all. This argument will appear to be of great force, when it is known that we are able to trace back the series of writers to a contact with the historical books of the New Testament, and to the age of the first emissaries of the religion, and to deduce it, by an unbroken continuation, from that end of the train to the present.

The remaining letters of the apostles, (and what more original than *their* letters can we have?) though written without the remotest design of transmitting the history of Christ, or of Christianity, to future ages, or even of making it known to their contemporaries, incidentally disclose to us the following circumstances:—Christ's descent and family; his innocence; the meekness and gentleness of his character; (a recognition which goes to the whole Gospel history;) his exalted nature; his circumcision; his transfiguration; his life of opposition and suffering; his patience and resignation; the appointment of the eucharist, and the manner of it; his agony; his confession before Pontius Pilate; his stripes, crucifixion, and burial; his resurrection; his appearance after it, first to Peter, then to the rest of the apostles; his ascension into heaven; and his designation to be the future judge of mankind;—the stated residence of the apostles at Jerusalem; the working of miracles by the first preachers of the Gospel, who were also the hearers of Christ;‡—the successful propagation of the religion; the persecution of its followers; the miraculous conversion of Paul; miracles wrought by himself and alleged in his controversies with his adversaries, and in letters to the persons amongst whom they were wrought; finally, that MIRACLES *were the signs of an apostle.**

In an epistle, bearing the name of Barnabas, the companion of Paul, probably genuine, certainly belonging to that age, we have the sufferings of Christ, his choice of apostles and their number, his passion, the scarlet robe, the vinegar and gall, the mocking and piercing, the casting lots for his coat,† his resurrection on the eighth (*i. e.* the first day of the week,‡) and the commemorative distinction of that day, his manifestation after his resurrection, and lastly, his ascension. We have also his miracles generally but positively referred to in the following words:—"Finally, teaching the people of Israel, and *doing many wonders and signs among them*, he preached to them, and showed the exceeding great love which he bare towards them."§

In an epistle of Clement, a hearer of St. Paul, although written for a purpose remotely connected with the Christian history, we have the resurrrection of Christ, and the subsequent mission of the apostles, recorded in these satisfactory terms: "The apostles have preached to us from our Lord Jesus Christ from God:—For, having received their command, and being *thoroughly assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ*, they went abroad, publishing that the kingdom of God was at hand."‖ We find noticed also, the humility, yet the power of Christ,¶ his descent from Abraham, his crucifixion. We have Peter and Paul represented as faithful and righteous pillars of the church; the numerous sufferings of Peter; the bonds, stripes, and stoning of Paul, and more particularly his extensive and unwearied travels.

In an epistle of Polycarp, a disciple of St. John, though only a brief hortatory letter, we have the humility, patience, sufferings, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, together with the apostolic character of St. Paul, distinctly recognised.** Of this same father we are also assured by Irenæus, that he (Irenæus,) had heard him relate, "what he had received from eye-witnesses concerning the Lord, both *concerning his miracles* and his doctrine."††

In the remaining works of Ignatius, the contemporary of Polycarp, larger than those of Polycarp (yet, like those of Polycarp, treating of subjects in nowise leading to any recital of the Christian history,) the occasional allusions are proportionably more numerous.—The descent of

* Michaelis has computed, and, as it should seem, fairly enough, that probably not more than twenty children perished by this cruel precaution.—Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament, translated by Marsh, vol. i. c. ii. sect. 11.

† There is no notice taken of Christianity in the Mishna, a collection of Jewish traditions compiled about the year 180; although it contains a Tract "De cultu peregrino," of strange or idolatrous worship; yet it cannot be disputed but that Christianity was perfectly well known in the world at this time. There is extremely little notice of the subject in the Jerusalem Talmud, compiled about the year 300, and not much more in the Babylonish Talmud, of the year 500; although both these works are of a religious nature, and although, when the first was compiled, Christianity was on the point of becoming the religion of the state, and, when the latter was published, had been so for 200 years.

‡ Heb. ii. 3. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which, at the first, began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us *by them that heard him*, God also bearing them witness, both *with signs and wonders*, and with *divers miracles*, and gifts of the Holy Ghost?" I allege this epistle without hesitation; for, whatever doubts may have been raised about its author, there can be none concerning the age in which it was written. No epistle in the collection carries about it more indubitable marks of antiquity than this does. It speaks, for instance, throughout, of the temple as then standing, and of the worship of the temple as then subsisting. Heb. viii. 4: "For, if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing there *are* priests that offer according to the law." Again, Heb. xiii. 10: "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which *serve* the tabernacle."

* "Truly *the signs of an apostle* were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."—2 Cor. xii. 12.

† Ep. Bar. c. vii. ‡ Ibid. c. vi. § Ibid. c. v.
‖ Ep. Clem. Rom. c. xlii. ¶ Ep. Clem. Rom. c. xvi
** Pol. Ep. ad Phil. c. v. viii. ii. iii.
†† Ir. ad Flor. ap. Euseb. l. v. c. 20.

Christ from David, his mother Mary, his miraculous conception, the star at his birth, his baptism by John, the reason assigned for it, his appeal to the prophets, the ointment poured on his head, his sufferings under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch, his resurrection, the Lord's day called and kept in commemoration of it, and the eucharist, in both its parts,—are unequivocally referred to. Upon the resurrection, this writer is even circumstantial. He mentions the apostles' eating and drinking with Christ after he had risen, their feeling and their handling him; from which last circumstance Ignatius raises this just reflection;—"They believed, being convinced both by his flesh and spirit; for this cause, they despised death, and were found to be above it."*

Quadratus, of the same age with Ignatius, has left us the following noble testimony:—"The works of our Saviour were always conspicuous, for they were real; both those that were healed, and those that were raised from the dead; who were seen not only when they were healed or raised, but for a long time afterwards: not only whilst he dwelled on this earth, but also after his departure, and for a good while after it, insomuch that some of them have reached to our times."†

Justin Martyr came little more than thirty years after Quadratus. From Justin's works, which are still extant, might be collected a tolerably complete account of Christ's life, in all points agreeing with that which is delivered in our Scriptures; taken indeed, in a great measure, from those Scriptures, but still proving that this account, and no other, was the account known and extant in that age. The miracles in particular, which form the part of Christ's history most material to be traced, stand fully and distinctly recognised in the following passage:—"He healed those who had been blind, and deaf, and lame from their birth; causing, by his word, one to leap, another to hear, and a third to see: and by raising the dead, and making them to live, he induced, by his works, the men of that age to know him."‡

It is unnecessary to carry these citations lower, because the history, after this time, occurs in ancient Christian writings as familiarly as it is wont to do in modern sermons;—occurs always the same in substance, and always that which our evangelists represent.

This is not only true of those writings of Christians, which are genuine, and of acknowledged authority; but it is, in a great measure, true of *all* their ancient writings which remain; although some of these may have been erroneously ascribed to authors to whom they did not belong, or may contain false accounts, or may appear to be undeserving of credit, or never indeed to have obtained any. Whatever fables they have mixed with the narrative, they preserve the material parts, the leading facts, as we have them; and, so far as they do this, although they be evidence of nothing else, they are evidence that these points were *fixed*, were received and acknowledged by all Christians in the ages in which the books were written. At least, it may be asserted, that, in the places where we were most likely to meet with such things, if such things had existed, no relicks appear of any story substantially different from the present, as the cause, or as the pretence of the institution.

Now that the original story, the story delivered by the first preachers of the institution, should have died away so entirely as to have left no record or memorial of its existence, although so many records and memorials of the time and transaction remain; and that another story should have stepped into its place, and gained exclusive possession of the belief of all who professed themselves disciples of the institution, is beyond any example of the corruption of even oral tradition, and still less consistent with the experience of written history: and this improbability, which is very great, is rendered still greater by the reflection, that no such *change* as the oblivion of one story, and the substitution of another, took place in any future period of the Christian era. Christianity hath travelled through dark and turbulent ages; nevertheless it came out of the cloud and the storm, such, in substance, as it entered in. Many additions were made to the primitive history, and these entitled to different degrees of credit; many doctrinal errors also were from time to time grafted into the public creed; but still the original story remained, and remained the same. In all its principal parts, it has been fixed from the beginning.

Thirdly: The religious rites and usages that prevailed amongst the early disciples of Christianity, were such as belonged to, and sprung out of, the narrative now in our hands; which accordancy shows, that it was the narrative upon which these persons acted, and which they had received from their teachers. Our account makes the Founder of the religion direct that his disciples should be baptised: we know, that the first Christians were baptised. Our account makes him direct that they should hold religious assemblies: we find, that they did hold religious assemblies. Our accounts make the apostles assemble upon a stated day of the week: we find, and that from information perfectly independent of our accounts, that the Christians of the first century did observe stated days of assembling. Our histories record the institution of the rite which we call the Lord's Supper, and a command to repeat it in perpetual succession: we find, amongst the early Christians, the celebration of this rite universal. And indeed, we find concurring in all the above-mentioned observances, Christian societies of many different nations and languages, removed from one another by a great distance of place and dissimilitude of situation. It is also extremely material to remark, that there is no room for insinuating that our books were fabricated with a studious accommodation to the usages which obtained at the time they were written; that the authors of the books found the usages established, and framed the story to account for their original. The Scripture accounts, especially of the Lord's Supper, are too short and cursory, not to say too obscure, and, in this view, deficient, to allow a place for any such suspicion.*

Amongst the proofs of the truth of our proposition, viz. that the story, which we have *now*, is, in substance, the story which the Christians had

* Ad Smyr. c. iii. † Ap. Euseb. H. E. lib. 4. c 2.
‡ Just. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 288. ed. Thirl.

* The reader who is conversant in these researches, by comparing the short Scripture accounts of the Christian rites above-mentioned, with the minute and circumstantial directions contained in the pretended apostolical constitutions, will see the force of this observation: the difference between truth and forgery.

then, or, in other words, that the accounts in our Gospels are, as to their principal parts at least, the accounts which the apostles and original teachers of the religion delivered, one arises from observing, that it appears by the Gospels themselves, that the story was public at the time; that the Christian community was already in possession of the substance and principal parts of the narrative. The Gospels were not the original cause of the Christian history being believed, but were themselves among the consequences of that belief. This is expressly affirmed by Saint Luke, in his brief, but, as I think, very important and instructive preface:—"Forasmuch (says the evangelist) as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things *which are most surely believed amongst us, even as they delivered them unto us, which, from the beginning, were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word;* it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things *wherein thou hast been instructed.*"—This short introduction testifies, that the substance of the history, which the evangelist was about to write, was already believed by Christians; that it was believed upon the declarations of eye-witnesses and ministers of the word; that it formed the account of their religion in which Christians were instructed; that the office which the historian proposed to himself, was to trace each particular to its origin, and to fix the certainty of many things which the reader had before heard of. In Saint John's Gospel, the same point appears hence, that there are some principal facts, to which the historian refers, but which he does not relate. A remarkable instance of this kind is the *ascension*, which is not mentioned by Saint John in its place, at the conclusion of his history; but which is plainly referred to in the following words of the sixth chapter:*—"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" And still more positively in the words which Christ, according to our evangelist, spoke to Mary after his resurrection, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God."† This can only be accounted for by the supposition that Saint John wrote under a sense of the notoriety of Christ's ascension, amongst those by whom his book was likely to be read. The same account must also be given of Saint Matthew's omission of the same important fact. The thing was very well known, and it did not occur to the historian that it was necessary to add any particulars concerning it. It agrees also with this solution, and with no other, that neither Matthew, nor John, disposes of the person of our Lord in any manner whatever. Other intimations in Saint John's Gospel of the then general notoriety of the story are the following: His manner of introducing his narrative (ch. i. ver. 15:) "John bare witness of him, and cried, saying,"—evidently presupposes that his readers knew who John was. His rapid parenthetical reference to John's imprisonment, "for John was not yet cast into prison,"‡ could only come from a writer whose mind was in the habit of considering John's imprisonment as perfectly notorious. The description of Andrew by the addition "Simon Peter's brother,"* takes it for granted, that Simon Peter was well known. His name had not been mentioned before. The evangelist's noticing† the prevailing misconstruction of a discourse, which Christ held with the beloved disciple, proves that the characters and the discourse were already public. And the observation which these instances afford, is of equal validity for the purpose of the present argument, whoever were the authors of the histories.

These *four* circumstances; first, the recognition of the account in its principal parts, by a series of succeeding writers; secondly, the total absence of any account of the origin of the religion substantially different from ours; thirdly, the early and extensive prevalence of rites and institutions, which result from our account; fourthly, our account bearing, in its construction, proof that it is an account of facts, which were known and believed at the time;—are sufficient, I conceive, to support an assurance, that the story which we have now, is, in general, the story which Christians had at the beginning. I say *in general;* by which term I mean, that it is the same in its texture, and in its principal facts. For instance, I make no doubt, for the reasons above stated, but that the resurrection of the Founder of the religion was always a part of the Christian story. Nor can a doubt of this remain upon the mind of any one who reflects that the resurrection is, in some form or other, asserted, referred to, or assumed, in every Christian writing, of every description, which hath come down to us.

And if our evidence stopped here, we should have a strong case to offer: for we should have to allege, that in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, a certain number of persons set about an attempt of establishing a new religion in the world: in the prosecution of which purpose, they voluntarily encountered great dangers, undertook great labours, sustained great sufferings, all *for* a miraculous story which they published wherever they came; and that the resurrection of a dead man, whom during his life they had followed and accompanied, was a constant part of this story. I know nothing in the above statement which can, with any appearance of reason, be disputed; and I know nothing, in the history of the human species, similar to it.

CHAPTER VIII

There is satisfactory evidence that many professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

THAT the story which we have now is, in the main, the story which the apostles published, is, I think, nearly certain, from the considerations which have been proposed. But whether, when we come to the particulars, and the detail of the

* Also John iii. 13; and xvi. 28. † John xx. 17. ‡ John iii. 24.

* John i. 40. † Ibid. xxi 24.

narrative, the historical books of the New Testament be deserving of credit as histories, so that a fact ought to be accounted true, because it is found in them; or whether they are entitled to be considered as representing the accounts which, true or false, the apostles published;—whether their authority, in either of these views, can be trusted to, is a point which necessarily depends upon what we know of the books, and of their authors.

Now, in treating of this part of our argument, the first and most material observation upon the subject is, that such was the situation of the authors to whom the four Gospels are ascribed, that, if any one of the four be genuine, it is sufficient for our purpose. The received author of the first, was an original apostle and emissary of the religion. The received author of the second, was an inhabitant of Jerusalem at the time, to whose house the apostles were wont to resort, and himself an attendant upon one of the most eminent of that number. The received author of the third, was a stated companion and fellow-traveller of the most active of all the teachers of the religion, and in the course of his travels frequently in the society of the original apostles. The received author of the fourth, as well as of the first, was one of these apostles. No stronger evidence of the truth of a history can arise from the situation of the historian, than what is here offered. The authors of all the histories lived at the time and upon the spot. The authors of two of the histories were present at many of the scenes which they describe; eye-witnesses of the facts, ear-witnesses of the discourses; writing from personal knowledge and recollection; and, what strengthens their testimony, writing upon a subject in which their minds were deeply engaged, and in which, as they must have been very frequently repeating the accounts to others, the passages of the history would be kept continually alive in their memory. Whoever reads the Gospels (and they ought to be read for this particular purpose,) will find in them not merely a general affirmation of miraculous powers, but detailed circumstantial accounts of miracles, with specifications of time, place, and persons; and these accounts many and various. In the Gospels, therefore, which bear the names of Matthew and John, these narratives, if they really proceeded from these men, must either be true, as far as the fidelity of human recollection is usually to be depended upon, that is, must be true in substance, and in their principal parts (which is sufficient for the purpose of proving a supernatural agency,) or they must be wilful and meditated falsehoods. Yet the writers who fabricated and uttered these falsehoods, if they be such, are of the number of those who, unless the whole contexture of the Christian story be a dream, sacrificed their ease and safety in the cause, and for a purpose the most inconsistent that is possible with dishonest intentions. They were villains for no end but to teach honesty, and martyrs without the least prospect of honour or advantage.

The Gospels which bear the name of Mark and Luke, although not the narratives of eye-witnesses, are, if genuine, removed from that only by one degree. They are the narratives of contemporary writers; or writers themselves mixing with the business; one of the two probably living in the place which was the principal scene of action; both living in habits of society and correspondence with those who had been present at the transactions which they relate. The latter of them accordingly tells us, (and with apparent sincerity, because he tells it without pretending to personal knowledge, and without claiming for his work greater authority than belonged to it,) that the things which were believed amongst Christians, came from those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word; that he had traced accounts up to their source; and that he was prepared to instruct his reader in the certainty of the things which he related.* Very few histories lie so close to their facts; very few historians are so nearly connected with the subject of their narrative, or possess such means of authentic information, as these.

The situation of the writers applies to the *truth* of the facts which they record. But at present we use their testimony to a point somewhat short of this, namely, that the facts recorded in the Gospels, whether true or false, are the facts, and the sort of facts, which the original preachers of the religion alleged. Strictly speaking, I am concerned only to show, that what the Gospels contain is the same as what the apostles preached. Now, how stands the proof of this point? A set of men went about the world, publishing a story composed of miraculous accounts, (for miraculous from the very nature and exigency of the case they must have been,) and, upon the strength of these accounts, called upon mankind to quit the religions in which they had been educated, and to take up, thenceforth, a new system of opinions, and new rules of action. What is more in attestation of these accounts, that is, in support of an institution of which these accounts were the foundation, is that the same men voluntarily exposed themselves to harassing and perpetual labours, dangers, and sufferings. We want to know what these accounts were. We have the particulars, *i. e.* many particulars, from two of their own number. We have them from an attendant of one of the number, and who, there is reason to believe, was an inhabitant of Jerusalem at the time. We have them from a fourth writer, who accompanied the most laborious missionary of the institution in his travels; who, in the course of these travels, was frequently brought into the society of the rest; and who, let it be observed, begins his narrative by telling us that he is about to relate the things which had been delivered by those who were ministers of the word, and eye-witnesses of the facts. I do not know what information can be more satisfactory than this. We may, perhaps, perceive the force and value of it more sensibly, if we reflect how *requiring* we should have been if we had wanted it. Supposing it to be sufficiently proved, that the religion now professed among us, owed its original to the preaching and ministry of a number of men, who, about eighteen centuries ago, set forth in the world a new system of religious opinions, founded upon certain extraordinary things which they related of a wonderful person who had appeared in Judea; suppose it to

* Why should not the candid and modest preface of this historian be believed, as well as that which Dion Cassius prefixes to his Life of Commodus? "These things and the following I write not from the report of others, but from my own knowledge and observation." I see no reason to doubt but that both passages describe truly enough the situation of the authors.

be also sufficiently proved, that, in the course and prosecution of their ministry, these men had subjected themselves to extreme hardships, fatigue, and peril; but suppose the accounts which they published had not been committed to writing till some ages after their times, or at least that no histories, but what had been composed some ages afterwards, had reached our hands; we should have said, and with reason, that we were willing to believe these men under the circumstances in which they delivered their testimony, but that we did not, at this day, know with sufficient evidence what their testimony was. Had we received the particulars of it from any of their own number, from any of those who lived and conversed with them, from any of their hearers, or even from any of their contemporaries, we should have had something to rely upon. Now, if our books be genuine, we have all these. We have the very species of information which, as it appears to me, our imagination would have carved out for us, if it had been wanting.

But I have said, that if *any one* of the four Gospels be genuine, we have not only direct historical testimony to the point we contend for, but testimony which, so far as that point is concerned, cannot reasonably be rejected. If the first Gospel was really written by Matthew, we have the narrative of one of the number, from which to judge what were the miracles, and the kind of miracles, which the apostles attributed to Jesus. Although, for argument's sake, and only for argument's sake, we should allow that this Gospel had been erroneously ascribed to Matthew; yet, if the Gospel of Saint John be genuine, the observation holds with no less strength. Again, although the Gospels both of Matthew and John could be supposed to be spurious, yet, if the Gospel of Saint Luke were truly the composition of that person, or of any person, be his name what it might, who was actually in the situation in which the author of that Gospel professes himself to have been, or if the Gospel which bears the name of Mark really proceeded from him; we still, even upon the lowest supposition, possess the accounts of one writer at least, who was not only contemporary with the apostles, but associated with them in their ministry; which authority seems sufficient, when the question is simply what it was which these apostles advanced.

I think it material to have this well noticed. The New Testament contains a great number of distinct writings, the genuineness of any one of which is almost sufficient to prove the truth of the religion: it contains, however, four distinct histories, the genuineness of any one of which is perfectly sufficient. If, therefore, we must be considered as encountering the risk of error in assigning the authors of our books, we are entitled to the advantage of so many separate probabilities. And although it should appear that some of the evangelists had seen and used each other's works; this discovery, whilst it subtracts indeed from their characters as testimonies strictly independent, diminishes, I conceive, little, either their separate authority (by which I mean the authority of any one that is genuine,) or their mutual confirmation. For, let the most disadvantageous supposition possible be made concerning them; let it be allowed, what I should have no great difficulty in admitting, that Mark compiled his history almost entirely from those of Matthew and Luke; and let it also for a moment be supposed that these histories were not, in fact, written by Matthew and Luke; yet, if it be true that Mark, a contemporary of the apostles, living in habits of society with the apostles, a fellow-traveller and fellow-labourer with some of them; if, I say, it be true that this person made the compilation, it follows, that the writings from which he made it existed in the time of the apostles, and not only so, but that they were then in such esteem and credit, that a companion of the apostles formed a history out of them. Let the Gospel of Mark be called an epitome of that of Matthew; if a person in the situation in which Mark is described to have been, actually made the epitome, it affords the strongest possible attestation to the character of the original.

Again, parallelisms in sentences, in words, and in the order of words, have been traced out between the Gospel of Matthew and that of Luke; which concurrence cannot easily be explained otherwise than by supposing, either that Luke had consulted Matthew's history, or, what appears to me in no wise incredible, that minutes of some of Christ's discourses, as well as brief memoirs of some passages of his life, had been committed to writing at the time; and that such written accounts had by both authors been occasionally admitted into their histories. Either supposition is perfectly consistent with the acknowledged formation of St. Luke's narrative, who professes not to write as an eye-witness, but to have investigated the original of every account which he delivers: in other words, to have collected them from such documents and testimonies, as he, who had the best opportunities of making inquiries, judged to be authentic. Therefore, allowing that this writer also, in some instances, borrowed from the Gospel which we call Matthew's, and once more allowing, for the sake of stating the argument, that that Gospel was not the production of the author to whom we ascribe it; yet still we have, in Saint Luke's Gospel, a history given by a writer immediately connected with the transaction, with the witnesses of it, with the persons engaged in it, and composed from materials which that person, thus situated, deemed to be safe sources of intelligence; in other words, whatever supposition be made concerning any or all the other Gospels, if Saint Luke's Gospel be genuine, we have *in it* a credible evidence of the point which we maintain.

The Gospel according to Saint John appears to be, and is on all hands allowed to be, an independent testimony, strictly and properly so called. Notwithstanding, therefore, any connexion, or supposed connexion, between some of the Gospels, I again repeat what I before said, that if any one of the four be genuine, we have, in that one strong reason, from the character and situation of the writer, to believe that we possess the accounts which the original emissaries of the religion delivered.

Secondly: In treating of the written evidences of Christianity, next to their separate, we are to consider their aggregate authority. Now, there is in the evangelic history a cumulation of testimony which belongs hardly to any other history, but which our habitual mode of reading the Scriptures sometimes causes us to overlook. When a passage, in any wise relating to the history of Christ, is read to us out of the epistle of Clemens Romanus, the epistles of Ignatius, of Polycarp, or

from any other writing of that age, we are immediately sensible of the confirmation which it affords to the Scripture account. Here is a new witness. Now, if we had been accustomed to read the Gospel of Matthew alone, and had known that of Luke only as the generality of Christians know the writings of the apostolical fathers, that is, had known that such a writing was extant and acknowledged; when we came, for the first time, to look into what it contained, and found many of the facts which Matthew recorded, recorded also there, many other facts of a similar nature added, and throughout the whole work the same general series of transactions stated, and the same general character of the person who was the subject of the history preserved, I apprehend that we should feel our minds strongly impressed by this discovery of fresh evidence. We should feel a renewal of the same sentiment in first reading the Gospel of Saint John. That of Saint Mark perhaps would strike us as an abridgment of the history with which we were already acquainted; but we should naturally reflect, that if that history was abridged by such a person as Mark, or by any person of so early an age, it afforded one of the highest possible attestations to the value of the work. This successive disclosure of proof would leave us assured, that there must have been at least some reality in a story which not one, but many, had taken in hand to commit to writing. The very existence of four separate histories would satisfy us that the subject had a foundation; and when, amidst the variety which the different information of the different writers had supplied to their accounts, or which their different choice and judgment in selecting their materials had produced, we observed many facts to stand the same in all; of these facts, at least, we should conclude, that they were fixed in their credit and publicity. If, after this, we should come to the knowledge of a distinct history, and that also of the same age with the rest, taking up the subject where the others had left it, and carrying on a narrative of the effects produced in the world by the extraordinary causes of which we had already been informed, and which effects subsist at this day, we should think the reality of the original story in no little degree established by this supplement. If subsequent inquiries should bring to our knowledge, one after another, letters written by some of the principal agents in the business, upon the business, and during the time of their activity and concern in it, assuming all along and recognising the original story, agitating the questions that arose out of it, pressing the obligations which resulted from it, giving advice and directions to those who acted upon it; I conceive that we should find, in every one of these, a still further support to the conclusion we had formed. At present, the weight of this successive confirmation is, in a great measure, unperceived by us. The evidence does not appear to us what it is; for, being from our infancy accustomed to regard the New Testament as one book, we see in it only one testimony. The whole occurs to us as a single evidence; and its different parts, not as distinct attestations, but as different portions only of the same. Yet in this conception of the subject, we are certainly mistaken; for the very discrepancies among the several documents which form our volume, prove, if all other proof were wanting, that in their original composition they were separate, and most of them independent productions.

If we dispose our ideas in a different order, the matter stands thus:—Whilst the transaction was recent, and the original witnesses were at hand to relate it; and whilst the apostles were busied in preaching and travelling, in collecting disciples, in forming and regulating societies of converts, in supporting themselves against opposition; whilst they exercised their ministry under the harassings of frequent persecution, and in a state of almost continual alarm, it is not probable that, in this engaged, anxious, and unsettled condition of life, they would think immediately of writing histories for the information of the public or of posterity.* But it is very probable, that emergencies might draw from some of them occasional letters upon the subject of their mission, to converts, or to societies of converts, with which they were connected; or that they might address written discourses and exhortations to the disciples of the institution at large, which would be received and read with a respect proportioned to the character of the writer. Accounts in the mean time would get abroad of the extraordinary things that had been passing, written with different degrees of information and correctness. The extension of the Christian society, which could no longer be instructed by a personal intercourse with the apostles, and the possible circulation of imperfect or erroneous narratives, would soon teach some amongst them the expediency of sending forth authentic memoirs of the life and doctrine of their Master. When accounts appeared authorized by the name, and credit, and situation of the writers, recommended or recognised by the apostles and first preachers of the religion, or found to coincide with what the apostles and first preachers of the religion had taught, other accounts would fall into disuse and neglect; whilst these maintaining their reputation (as, if genuine and well founded, they would do) under the test of time, inquiry, and contradiction, might be expected to make their way into the hands of Christians of all countries of the world.

This seems the natural progress of the business; and with this the records in our possession, and the evidence concerning them, correspond. We have remaining, in the first place, many letters of the kind above described, which have been preserved with a care and fidelity answering to the respect with which we may suppose that such letters would be received. But as these letters were not written to prove the truth of the Christian religion, in the sense in which we regard that question: nor to convey information of facts, of which those to whom the letters were written had been previously informed; we are not to look in them for any thing more than incidental allusions to the Christian history. We are able, however, to gather from these documents, various particular attestations which have been already enumerated; and this is a species of written evidence, as far as it goes, in the highest degree satisfactory, and in point of time perhaps the first. But for our more circumstantial information, we have in the next place five direct *histories*, bearing the names of persons acquainted, by their situation, with the truth of what they relate, and three of them purporting, in the very body of the narrative, to be

* This thought occurred to Eusebius: "Nor were the apostles of Christ greatly concerned about the writing of books, being engaged in a more excellent ministry, which is above all human power."—Eccles. Hist. l. iii. c. 24 The same consideration accounts also for the paucity of Christian writings in the first century of its era.

written by such persons; of which books we know, that some were in the hands of those who were contemporaries of the apostles, and that, in the age immediately posterior to that, they were in the hands, we may say, of every one, and received by Christians with so much respect and deference, as to be constantly quoted and referred to by them, without any doubt of the truth of their accounts. They were treated as such histories, proceeding from such authorities, might expect to be treated. In the preface to one of our histories, we have intimations left us of the existence of some ancient accounts which are now lost. There is nothing in this circumstance that can surprise us. It was to be expected, from the magnitude and novelty of the occasion, that such accounts would swarm. When better accounts came forth, these died away. Our present histories superseded others. They soon acquired a character and established a reputation which does not appear to have belonged to any other: that, at least, can be proved concerning them, which cannot be proved concerning any other.

But to return to the point which led to these reflections. By considering our records in either of the two views in which we have represented them, we shall perceive that we possess a *collection of proofs*, and not a naked or solitary testimony; and that the written evidence is of such a kind, and comes to us in such a state, as the natural order and progress of things, in the infancy of the institution, might be expected to produce.

Thirdly: The genuineness of the historical books of the New Testament is undoubtedly a point of importance, because the strength of their evidence is augmented by our knowledge of the situation of their authors, their relation to the subject, and the part which they sustained in the transaction; and the testimonies which we are able to produce, compose a firm ground of persuasion, that the Gospels were written by the persons whose names they bear. Nevertheless, I must be allowed to state, that to the argument which I am endeavouring to maintain, this point is not essential; I mean, so essential as that the fate of the argument depends upon it. The question before us is, whether the Gospels exhibit the story which the apostles and first emissaries of the religion published, and *for* which they acted and suffered in the manner in which, for some miraculous story or other, they did act and suffer. Now let us suppose that we possessed no other information concerning these books than that they were written by early disciples of Christianity; that they were known and read during the time, or near the time, of the original apostles of the religion; that by Christians whom the apostles instructed, by societies of Christians which the apostles founded, these books were *received*, (by which term "received," I mean that they were believed to contain authentic accounts of the transactions upon which the religion rested, and accounts which were accordingly used, repeated, and relied upon,) this reception would be a valid proof that these books, whoever were the authors of them, must have accorded with what the apostles taught. A reception by the first race of Christians, is evidence that they agreed with what the first teachers of the religion delivered. In particular, if they had not agreed with what the apostles themselves preached, how could they have gained credit in churches and societies which the apostles established?

Now the fact of their early existence, and not only of their existence but their reputation, is made out by some ancient testimonies which do not happen to specify the names of the writers: add to which, what hath been already hinted, that two out of the four Gospels contain averments in the body of the history, which, though they do not disclose the names, fix the time and situation of the authors, viz. that one was written by an eye-witness of the sufferings of Christ, the other by a contemporary of the apostles. In the Gospel of Saint John, (xix. 35,) after describing the crucifixion, with the particular circumstance of piercing Christ's side with a spear, the historian adds, as for himself, "and he that saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe." Again, (xxi. 24,) after relating a conversation which passed between Peter and "the disciple," as it is there expressed, "whom Jesus loved," it is added, "this is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things." This testimony, let it be remarked, is not the less worthy of regard, because it is, in one view, imperfect. The name is not mentioned; which, if a fraudulent purpose had been intended, would have been done. The third of our present Gospels purports to have been written by the person who wrote the Acts of the Apostles; in which latter history, or rather, latter part of the same history, the author, by using, in various places, the first person plural, declares himself to have been a contemporary of all, and a companion of one, of the original preachers of the religion.

CHAPTER IX.

There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Not forgetting, therefore, what credit is due to the evangelical history, supposing even any one of the four Gospels to be genuine; what credit is due to the Gospels, even supposing nothing to be known concerning them but that they were written by early disciples of the religion, and received with deference by early Christian churches: more especially not forgetting what credit is due to the New Testament in its capacity of *cumulative* evidence; we now proceed to state the proper and distinct proofs, which show not only the general value of these records, but their specific authority, and the high probability there is that they actually came from the persons whose names they bear.

There are, however, a few preliminary reflections, by which we may draw up with more regularity to the propositions upon which the close and particular discussion of the subject depends. Of which nature are the following:

I. We are able to produce a great number of ancient *manuscripts*, found in many different countries, and in countries widely distant from each other, all of them anterior to the art of print-

ing, some certainly seven or eight hundred years old, and some which have been preserved probably above a thousand years.* We have also many ancient *versions* of these books, and some of them into languages which are not at present, nor for many ages have been, spoken in any part of the world. The existence of these manuscripts and versions proves that the Scriptures were not the production of any modern contrivance. It does away also the uncertainty which hangs over such publications as the works, real or pretended, of Ossian and Rowley, in which the editors are challenged to produce their manuscripts, and to show where they obtained their copies. The number of manuscripts, far exceeding those of any other book, and their wide dispersion, afford an argument, in some measure to the senses, that the Scriptures anciently, in like manner as at this day, were more read and sought after than any other books, and that also in many different countries. The greatest part of spurious Christian writings are utterly lost, the rest preserved by some single manuscript. There is weight also in Dr. Bentley's observation, that the New Testament has suffered less injury by the errors of transcribers, than the works of any profane author of the same size and antiquity; that is, there never was any writing, in the preservation and purity of which the world was so interested or so careful.

II. An argument of great weight with those who are judges of the proofs upon which it is founded, and capable, through their testimony, of being addressed to every understanding, is that which arises from the style and language of the New Testament. It is just such a language as might be expected from the apostles, from persons of their age and in their situation, and from no other persons. It is the style neither of classic authors, nor of the ancient Christian Fathers, but Greek coming from men of Hebrew origin; abounding, that is, with Hebraic and Syriac idioms, such as would naturally be found in the writings of men who used a language spoken indeed where they lived, but not the common dialect of the country. This happy peculiarity is a strong proof of the genuineness of these writings: for who should forge them? The Christian fathers were for the most part totally ignorant of Hebrew, and therefore were not likely to insert Hebraisms and Syriasms into their writings. The few who had a knowledge of the Hebrew, as Justin Martyr, Origen, and Epiphanius, wrote in a language which bears no resemblance to that of the New Testament. The Nazarenes, who understood Hebrew, used chiefly, perhaps almost entirely, the Gospel of St. Matthew, and therefore cannot be suspected of forging the rest of the sacred writings. The argument, at any rate, proves the antiquity of these books; that they belonged to the age of the apostles; that they could be composed indeed in no other.†

III. Why should we question the genuineness of these books? Is it for that they contain accounts of supernatural events? I apprehend that this, at the bottom, is the real, though secret, cause of our hesitation about them: for, had the writings inscribed with the names of Matthew and John, related nothing but ordinary history, there would have been no more doubt whether these writings were theirs, than there is concerning the acknowledged works of Josephus or Philo; that is, there would have been no doubt at all. Now it ought to be considered that this reason, however it may apply to the credit which is given to a writer's judgment or veracity, affects the question of genuineness very indirectly. The works of Bede exhibit many wonderful relations: but who, for that reason, doubts that they were written by Bede? The same of a multitude of other authors. To which may be added, that we ask no more for our books than what we allow to other books in some sort similar to ours: we do not deny the genuineness of the Koran; we admit that the history of Apollonius Tyanæus, purporting to be written by Philostratus, was really written by Philostratus.

IV. If it had been an easy thing in the early times of the institution to have forged Christian writings, and to have obtained currency and reception to the forgeries, we should have had many appearing in the name of Christ himself. No writings would have been received with so much avidity and respect as these: consequently none afforded so great temptation to forgery. Yet have we heard but of one attempt of this sort, deserving of the smallest notice, *that* in a piece of a very few lines, and so far from succeeding, I mean, from obtaining acceptance and reputation, or an acceptance and reputation in any wise similar to that which can be proved to have attended the books of the New Testament, that it is not so much as mentioned by any writer of the first three centuries. The learned reader need not be informed that I mean the epistle of Christ to Abgarus, king of Edessa, found at present in the work of Eusebius,* as a piece acknowledged by him, though not without considerable doubt whether the whole passage be not an interpolation, as it is most certain, that, after the publication of Eusebius's work, this epistle was universally rejected.†

V. If the ascription of the Gospels to their respective authors had been arbitrary or conjectural, they would have been ascribed to more eminent men. This observation holds concerning the first three Gospels, the reputed authors of which were enabled, by their situation, to obtain true intelligence, and were likely to deliver an honest account of what they knew, but were persons not distinguished in the history by extraordinary marks of notice or commendation. Of the apostles, I hardly know any one of whom less is said than of Matthew, or of whom the little that is said, is less calculated to magnify his character. Of Mark, nothing is said in the Gospels; and what is said of any person of that name in the

* The Alexandrian manuscript, now in the British Museum, was written probably in the fourth or fifth century.

† See this argument stated more at large in Michaelis's Introduction (Marsh's translation,) vol. i. c. ii. sect. 10, from which these observations are taken.

* Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 15.

† Augustin. A. D. 395. (De Consens. Evang. c. 34.) had *heard* that the Pagans pretended to be possessed of an epistle from Christ to Peter and Paul; but he had never seen it, and appears to doubt of the existence of any such piece, either genuine or spurious. No other ancient writer mentions it. He also, and he alone, notices, and that in order to condemn it, an epistle ascribed to Christ by the Manichees, A. D. 270, and a short hymn attributed to him by the priscillianists, A. D. 378. [cont. Faust. Man. lib. xxviii. c. 4.] The lateness of the writer who notices these things, the manner in which he notices them, and, above all, the silence of every preceding writer, render them unworthy of consideration.

Acts, and in the Epistles, in no part bestows praise or eminence upon him. The name of Luke is mentioned only in Saint Paul's Epistles,* and that very transiently. The judgment, therefore, which assigned these writings to these authors proceeded, it may be presumed, upon proper knowledge and evidence, and not upon a voluntary choice of names.

VI. Christian writers and Christian churches appear to have soon arrived at a very general agreement upon the subject, and that without the interposition of any public authority.—When the diversity of opinion, which prevailed, and prevails among Christians in other points is considered, their concurrence in the canon of Scripture is remarkable, and of great weight, especially as it seems to have been the result of private and free inquiry. We have no knowledge of any interference of authority in the question, before the council of Laodicea in the year 363. Probably the decree of this council rather declared than regulated the public judgment, or, more properly speaking, the judgment of some neighbouring churches; the council itself consisting of no more than thirty or forty bishops of Lydia and the adjoining countries.† Nor does its authority seem to have extended further; for we find numerous Christian writers, after this time, discussing the question, "What books were entitled to be received as Scripture," with great freedom, upon proper grounds of evidence, and without any reference to the decision at Laodicea.

These considerations are not to be neglected: but of an argument concerning the genuineness of ancient writings, the substance, undoubtedly, and strength, is ancient testimony.

This testimony it is necessary to exhibit somewhat in detail; for when Christian advocates merely tell us, that we have the same reason for believing the Gospels to be written by the evangelists whose name they bear, as we have for believing the Commentaries to be Cæsar's, the Æneid Virgil's, or the Orations Cicero's, they content themselves with an imperfect representation. They state nothing more than what is true, but they do not state the truth correctly. In the number, variety, and early date of our testimonies, we far exceed all other ancient books. For one, which the most celebrated work of the most celebrated Greek or Roman writer can allege, we produce many. But then it is more requisite in our books, than in theirs, to separate and distinguish them from spurious competitors. The result, I am convinced, will be satisfactory to every fair inquirer: but this circumstance renders an inquiry necessary.

In a work, however, like the present, there is a difficulty in finding a place for evidence of this kind. To pursue the details of proofs throughout, would be to transcribe a great part of Dr. Lardner's eleven octavo volumes: to leave the argument without proofs, is to leave it without effect; for the persuasion produced by this species of evidence depends upon a view and induction of the particulars which compose it.

The method which I propose to myself is, first to place before the reader, in one view, the propositions which comprise the several heads of our testimony, and afterwards to repeat the same propositions in so many distinct sections, with the necessary authorities subjoined to each.*

The following, then, are the allegations upon the subject, which are capable of being established by proof:—

I. That the historical books of the New Testament, meaning thereby the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, are quoted, or alluded to, by a series of Christian writers, beginning with those who were contemporary with the apostles, or who immediately followed them, and proceeding in close and regular succession from their time to the present.

II. That when they are quoted, or alluded to, they are quoted or alluded to with peculiar respect, as books *sui generis;* as possessing an authority which belonged to no other books, and as conclusive in all questions and controversies amongst Christians.

III. That they were, in very early times, collected into a distinct volume.

IV. That they were distinguished by appropriate names and titles of respect.

V. That they were publicly read and expounded in the religious assemblies of the early Christians.

VI. That commentaries were written upon them, harmonies formed out of them, different copies carefully collated, and versions of them made into different languages.

VII. That they were received by Christians of different sects, by many heretics as well as catholics, and usually appealed to by both sides in the controversies which arose in those days.

VIII. That the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of Saint Paul, the first Epistle of John, and the first of Peter, were received, without doubt, by those who doubted concerning the other books which are included in our present canon.

IX. That the Gospels were attacked by the early adversaries of Christianity, as books containing the accounts upon which the religion was founded.

X. That formal catalogues of authentic Scriptures were published; in all which our present sacred histories were included.

XI. That these propositions cannot be affirmed of any other books claiming to be books of Scripture; by which are meant those books which are commonly called apocryphal books of the New Testament

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SECTION I.

The historical books of the New Testament, meaning thereby the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, are quoted, or alluded to, by a series of Christian writers, beginning with those who were contemporary with the apostles, or who immediately followed them, and proceeding in close and regular succession from their time to the present.

* Col. iv. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 11. Philem. 24.

† Lardner, Cred. vol. viii. p. 291. *et seq.*

* The reader, when he has the propositions before him, will observe that the argument, if he should omit the sections, proceeds connectedly from this point.

The medium of proof stated in this proposition is, of all others, the most unquestionable, the least liable to any practices of fraud, and is not diminished by the lapse of ages. Bishop Burnet, in the History of his Own Times, inserts various extracts from Lord Clarendon's History. *One* such insertion is a proof, that Lord Clarendon's History was extant at the time when Bishop Burnet wrote, that it had been read by Bishop Burnet, that it was received by Bishop Burnet as a work of Lord Clarendon, and also regarded by him as an authentic account of the transactions which it relates; and it will be a proof of these points a thousand years hence, or as long as the books exist. Quintillian having quoted as Cicero's,* that well-known trait of dissembled vanity:—

"Si quid est in me ingenii, Judices, quod sentio quam sit exiguum;"—

the quotation would be strong evidence, were there any doubt, that the oration which opens with this address, actually came from Cicero's pen. These instances, however simple, may serve to point out to a reader, who is little accustomed to such researches, the nature and value of the argument.

The testimonies which we have to bring forward under this proposition are the following:

I. There is extant an epistle ascribed to Barnabas,† the companion of Paul. It is quoted as the epistle of Barnabas, by Clement of Alexandria, A. D. CXCIV; by Origen, A. D. CCXXX. It is mentioned by Eusebius, A. D. CCCXV, and by Jerome, A. D. CCCXCII, as an ancient work in their time, bearing the name of Barnabas, and as well known and read amongst Christians, though not accounted a part of Scripture. It purports to have been written soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, during the calamities which followed that disaster; and it bears the character of the age to which it professes to belong.

In this epistle appears the following remarkable passage:—"Let us, therefore, beware lest it come upon us, *as it is written;* There are many called, few chosen." From the expression, "as it is written," we infer with certainty, that at the time when the author of this epistle lived, there was a book extant, well known to Christians, and of authority amongst them, containing these words:—"Many are called, few chosen." Such a book is our present Gospel of Saint Matthew, in which this text is twice found,‡ and is found in no other book now known. There is a further observation to be made upon the terms of the quotation. The writer of the epistle was a Jew. The phrase "is written," was the very form in which the Jews quoted their Scriptures. It is not probable, therefore, that he would have used this phrase, and without qualification, of any books but what had acquired a kind of Scriptural authority. If the passage remarked in this ancient writing had been found in one of St. Paul's Epistles, it would have been esteemed by every one a high testimony to Saint Matthew's Gospel. It ought, therefore, to be remembered, that the writing in which it *is* found was probably by very few years posterior to those of Saint Paul.

Beside this passage, there are also in the epistle before us several others, in which the sentiment is the same with what we meet with in Saint Matthew's Gospel, and two or three in which we recognise the same words. In particular, the author of the epistle repeats the precept, "Give to every one that asketh thee;"* and saith that Christ chose as his apostles, who were to preach the Gospel, men who were great sinners, that he might show that he came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."†

II. We are in possession of an epistle written by Clement, bishop of Rome,‡ whom ancient writers, without any doubt or scruple, assert to have been the Clement whom Saint Paul mentions, Phil. iv. 3; "with *Clement* also, and other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life." This epistle is spoken of by the ancients as an epistle acknowledged by all; and, as Irenæus well represents its value, "written by Clement, who had seen the blessed apostles, and conversed with them; who had the preaching of the apostles still sounding in his ears, and their traditions before his eyes." It is addressed to the church of Corinth; and what alone may seem almost decisive of its authenticity, Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, about the year 170, *i. e.* about eighty or ninety years after the epistle was written, bears witness, "that it had been wont to be read in that church from ancient times."

This epistle affords, amongst others, the following valuable passages:—"Especially remembering the words of the Lord Jesus which he spake, teaching gentleness and long-suffering: for thus he said:§ 'Be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven unto you; as you do, so shall it be done unto you; as you give, so shall it be given unto you; as ye judge, so shall ye be judged; as ye show kindness, so shall kindness be shown unto you; with what measure ye mete, with the same shall it be measured to you.' By this command, and by these rules, let us establish ourselves, that we may always walk obediently to his holy words."

Again; "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, for he said, 'Wo to that man by whom offences come; it were better for him that he had not been born, than that he should offend one of my elect; it were better for him that a mill-stone should be tied about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the sea, than that he should offend one of my little ones.'"‖

In both these passages, we perceive the high respect paid to the words of Christ as recorded by the evangelists; "*Remember* the words of the Lord Jesus;—by this command, and by these rules, let us establish ourselves, that we may always walk

* Quint. lib. xi. c. i.

† Lardner, Cred. edit. 1755, vol. i. p. 23, *et seq.* The reader will observe from the references, that the materials of these sections are almost entirely extracted from Dr. Lardner's work;—my office consisted in arrangement and selection.

‡ Matt. xx. 16; xxii. 14.

* Matt. v. 42. † Matt. ix. 13.

‡ Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 62, *et seq.*

§ "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," Matt. v. 7. "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you." Luke vi. 37, 38. "Judge not that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," Matt. vii. 1, 2.

‖ Matt. xviii. 6. "But whoso shall offend one of these litle ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the sea." The latter part of the passage in Clement agrees more exactly with Luke xvii. 2: "It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

obediently to his holy words." We perceive also in Clement a total unconsciousness of doubt, whether these were the real words of Christ, which are read as such in the Gospels. This observation indeed belongs to the whole series of testimony, and especially to the most ancient part of it. Whenever any thing now read in the Gospels is met with in an early Christian writing, it is always observed to stand there as acknowledged truth, *i. e.* to be introduced without hesitation, doubt, or apology. It is to be observed also, that, as this epistle was written in the name of the church of Rome, and addressed to the church of Corinth, it ought to be taken as exhibiting the judgment not only of Clement, who drew up the letter, but of these churches themselves, at least as to the authority of the books referred to.

It may be said, that, as Clement has not used words of quotation, it is not certain that he refers to any book whatever. The words of Christ, which he has put down, he might himself have heard from the apostles, or might have received through the ordinary medium of oral tradition. This has been said: but that no such inference can be drawn from the absence of words of quotation, is proved by the three following considerations:—First, that Clement, in the very same manner, namely, without any mark of reference, uses a passage now found in the epistle to the Romans;* which passage, from the peculiarity of the words which compose it, and from their order, it is manifest that he must have taken from the book. The same remark may be repeated of some very singular sentiments in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Secondly, that there are many sentences of Saint Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians standing in Clement's epistle without any sign of quotation, which yet certainly are quotations; because it appears that Clement had Saint Paul's epistle before him, inasmuch as in one place he mentions it in terms too express to leave us in any doubt:—"Take into your hands the epistle of the blessed apostle Paul." Thirdly, that this method of adopting words of Scripture without reference or acknowledgment, was, as will appear in the sequel, a method in general use amongst the most ancient Christian writers.—These analogies not only repel the objection, but cast the presumption on the other side, and afford a considerable degree of positive proof, that the words in question have been borrowed from the places of Scripture in which we now find them.

But take it if you will the other way, that Clement had heard these words from the apostles or first teachers of Christianity; with respect to the precise point of our argument, *viz.* that the Scriptures contain what the apostles taught, this supposition may serve almost as well.

III. Near the conclusion of the Epistle to the Romans, Saint Paul, amongst others, sends the following salutation: "Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, *Hermas*, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them."

Of Hermas, who appears in this catalogue of Roman Christians as contemporary with Saint Paul, a book bearing the name, and it is most probable rightly, is still remaining. It is called the Shepherd,† or Pastor of Hermas. Its antiquity is incontestable, from the quotations of it in Irenæus, A. D. 178; Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 194; Tertullian, A. D. 200; Origen, A. D. 230. The notes of time extant in the epistle itself, agree with this title, and with the testimonies concerning it, for it purports to have been written during the life-time of Clement.

In this piece are tacit allusions to Saint Matthew's, Saint Luke's, and Saint John's Gospels; that is to say, there are applications of thoughts and expressions found in these Gospels, without citing the place or writer from which they were taken. In this form appear in Hermas, the confessing and denying of Christ;* the parable of the seed sown;† the comparison of Christ's disciples to little children; the saying, "he that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery;‡ the singular expression "having received all power from his Father," in probable allusion to Matt. xxviii. 18; and Christ being the "gate," or only way of coming "to God," in plain allusion to John xiv. 6; x. 7. 9. There is also a probable allusion to Acts v. 32.

This piece is the representation of a vision, and has by many been accounted a weak and fanciful performance. I therefore observe, that the character of the writing has little to do with the purpose for which we adduce it. It is the age, in which it was composed, that gives the value to its testimony.

IV. Ignatius, as it is testified by ancient Christian writers, became bishop of Antioch about thirty-seven years after Christ's ascension; and, therefore, from his time, and place, and station, it is probable that he had known and conversed with many of the apostles. Epistles of Ignatius are referred to by Polycarp, his contemporary. Passages found in the epistles now extant under his name, are quoted by Irenæus, A. D. 178; by Origen, A. D. 230: and the occasion of writing the epistles is given at large by Eusebius and Jerome. What are called the smaller epistles of Ignatius, are generally deemed to be those which were read by Irenæus, Origen, and Eusebius.§

In these epistles are various undoubted allusions to the Gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint John; yet so far of the same form with those in the preceding articles, that, like them, they are not accompanied with marks of quotation.

Of these allusions the following are clear specimens:

Matt.‖ "Christ was baptized of John, that *all righteousness might be fulfilled by him.*"
"*Be ye as wise as serpents* in all things, and *harmless as a dove.*"

John.¶ "Yet the Spirit is not deceived, being from God: for it knows *whence it comes, and whither it goes.*"
"He (Christ) is the *door* of the Father, by which *enter in* Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the apostles and the church."

* Romans i. 29.
† Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 111.

* Matt. x. 32, 33, or, Luke xii. 8, 9.
† Matt. xiii. 3, or, Luke viii. 5.
‡ Luke xvi. 18. § Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 147.
‖ Chap. iii. 15. "For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."
Chap. x. 16. "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."
¶ Chap. iii. 8. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell *whence it cometh and whither it goeth*; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."
Chap. x. 9. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

As to the manner of quotation, this is observable;—Ignatius, in one place, speaks of Saint Paul in terms of high respect, and quotes his Epistle to the Ephesians by *name;* yet, in several other places, he borrows words and sentiments from the same epistle without mentioning it; which shows, that this was his general manner of using and applying writings then extant, and then of high authority.

V. Polycarp* had been taught by the apostles; had conversed with many who had seen Christ; was also, by the apostles, appointed bishop of Smyrna. This testimony concerning Polycarp is given by Irenæus, who in his youth had seen him: —"I can tell the place," saith Irenæus, "in which the blessed Polycarp sat and taught, and his going out and coming in, and the manner of his life and the form of his person, and the discourses he made to the people, and how he related his conversation with John, and others who had seen the Lord, and how he had related their sayings, and what he had heard concerning the Lord, both concerning his miracles and his doctrine, as he had received them from the eye-witnesses of the word of life: all which Polycarp related agreeable to the Scriptures."

Of Polycarp, whose proximity to the age and country and persons of the apostles is thus attested, we have one undoubted epistle remaining. And this, though a short letter, contains nearly forty clear allusions to books of the New Testament; which is strong evidence of the respect which Christians of that age bore for these books.

Amongst these, although the writings of Saint Paul are more frequently used by Polycarp than any other parts of Scripture, there are copious allusions to the Gospel of Saint Matthew, some to passages found in the Gospels both of Matthew and Luke, and some which more nearly resemble the words in Luke.

I select the following, as fixing the authority of the Lord's prayer, and the use of it amongst the primitive Christians: "If therefore we *pray* the Lord, that *he will forgive us, we ought also to forgive.*"

"With supplication *beseeching* the all-seeing God *not to lead us into temptation.*"

And the following, for the sake of repeating an observation already made, that words of our Lord found in our Gospels, were at this early day quoted as spoken by him; and not only so, but quoted with so little question or consciousness of doubt about their being really his words, as not even to mention, much less to canvass, the authority from which they were taken:

"But remembering what the Lord said, teaching, Judge not, that ye be not judged; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."†

Supposing Polycarp to have had these words from the books in which we now find them, it is manifest that these books were considered by him, and, as he thought, considered by his readers, as authentic accounts of Christ's discourses; and that that point was incontestable.

The following is a decisive, though what we call a tacit, reference to Saint Peter's speech in the Acts of the Apostles:—"whom God hath raised, having loosed the pains of death."*

VI. Papias,† a hearer of John, and companion of Polycarp, as Irenæus attests, and of that age, as all agree, in a passage quoted by Eusebius, from a work now lost, expressly ascribes the respective Gospels to Matthew and Mark; and in a manner which proves that these Gospels must have publicly borne the names of these authors at that time, and probably long before; for Papias does not say that one Gospel was written by Matthew, and another by Mark; but, assuming this as perfectly well known, he tells us from what materials Mark collected his account, *viz.* from Peter's preaching, and in what language Matthew wrote, *viz.* in Hebrew. Whether Papias was well informed in this statement, or not: to the point for which I produce this testimony, namely, that these books bore these names at this time, his authority is complete.

The writers hitherto alleged, had all lived and conversed with some of the apostles. The works of theirs which remain, are in general very short pieces, yet rendered extremely valuable by their antiquity; and none, short as they are, but what contain some important testimony to our historical Scriptures.‡

VII. Not long after these, that is, not much more than twenty years after the last, follows Justin Martyr.§ His remaining works are much larger than any that have yet been noticed. Although the nature of his two principal writings, one of which was addressed to heathens, and the other was a conference with a Jew, did not lead him to such frequent appeals to Christian books, as would have appeared in a discourse intended for Christian readers; we nevertheless reckon up in them between twenty and thirty quotations of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, certain, distinct, and copious: if each verse be counted separately, a much greater number; if each expression, a very great one.‖

We meet with quotations of three of the Gospels within the compass of half a page: "And in other words he says, Depart from me into outer darkness, which the Father hath prepared for Satan and his angels," (which is from Matthew xxv. 41.) "And again he said in other words, I give unto you power to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and venomous beasts, and upon all the power of the enemy." (This from Luke x. 19.) "And before he was crucified, he said, The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the Scribes and Pharisees, and be crucified,

* Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 192.
† Matt. vii. 1, 2. v. 7. Luke vi. 37, 38.

* Acts ii. 24. † Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 239.

‡ That the quotations are more thinly strown in these, than in the writings of the next and of succeeding ages, is in a good measure accounted for by the observation, that the Scriptures of the New Testament had not *yet*, nor by their recency hardly could have, become a general part of Christian education; read as the Old Testament was by Jews and Christians from their childhood, and thereby intimately mixing, as that had long done, with all their religious ideas, and with their language upon religious subjects. In process of time, and as soon perhaps as could be expected, this came to be the case. And then we perceive the effect, in a proportionably greater frequency, as well as copiousness of allusion. ¶

§ Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 258.

‖ "He cites our present canon, and particularly our four Gospels, continually, I dare say, above two hundred times." Jones's New and full Method. Append. vol. i. p. 589. ed. 1726.

¶ Mich. Introd. c. ii. sect. vi.

and rise again the third day." (This from Mark viii. 31.)

In another place, Justin quotes a passage in the history of Christ's birth, as delivered by Matthew and John, and fortifies his quotation by this remarkable testimony: "As they have taught, who have written the history of all things concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ: and we believe them."

Quotations are also found from the Gospel of Saint John.

What, moreover, seems extremely material to be observed is, that in all Justin's works, from which might be extracted almost a complete life of Christ, there are but two instances, in which he refers to any thing as said or done by Christ, which is not related concerning him in our present Gospels: which shows, that these Gospels, and these, we may say, alone, were the authorities from which the Christians of that day drew the information upon which they depended. One of these instances is of a saying of Christ, not met with in any book now extant.* The other, of a circumstance in Christ's baptism, namely, a fiery or luminous appearance upon the water, which, according to Epiphanius, is noticed in the Gospel of the Hebrews: and which might be true: but which, whether true or false, is mentioned by Justin, with a plain mark of diminution when compared with what he quotes as resting upon Scripture authority. The reader will advert to this distinction: "And then, when Jesus came to the river Jordan, where John was baptizing, as Jesus descended into the water, a fire also was kindled in Jordan; and when he came up out of the water, *the apostles of this our Christ have written*, that the Holy Ghost lighted upon him as a dove."

All the references in Justin are made without mentioning the author; which proves that these books were perfectly notorious, and that there were no other accounts of Christ then extant, or, at least, no others so received and credited as to make it necessary to distinguish these from the rest.

But although Justin mentions not the author's name, he calls the books, "Memoirs composed by the Apostles;" "Memoirs composed by the Apostles and their Companions;" which descriptions, the latter especially, exactly suit with the titles which the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles now bear.

VIII. Hegesippus† came about thirty years after Justin. His testimony is remarkable only for this particular; that he relates of himself, that, travelling from Palestine to Rome, he visited, on his journey, many bishops; and that, "in every succession, and in every city, the same doctrine is taught, which the Law and the Prophets, and the *Lord* teacheth." This is an important attestation, from good authority, and of high antiquity. It is generally understood, that by the word "Lord," Hegesippus intended some writing or writings, containing the teaching of Christ, in which sense alone the term combines with the other terms "Law and Prophets," which denote writings; and together with them admit of the verb "teacheth" in the present tense. Then that these writings were some or all of the books of the New Testament, is rendered probable from hence, that in the fragments of his works, which are preserved in Eusebius, and in a writer of the ninth century, enough, though it be little, is left to show, that Hegesippus expressed divers things in the style of the Gospels, and of the Acts of the Apostles; that he referred to the history in the second chapter of Matthew, and recited a text of that Gospel as spoken by our Lord.

IX. At this time, viz. about the year 170, the churches of Lyons and Vienne, in France, sent a relation of the sufferings of their martyrs to the churches of Asia and Phrygia.* The epistle is preserved entire by Eusebius. And what carries in some measure the testimony of these churches to a higher age, is, that they had now for their bishop, Pothinus, who was ninety years old, and whose early life consequently must have immediately joined on with the times of the apostles. In this epistle are exact references to the Gospels of Luke and John, and to the Acts of the Apostles; the form of reference the same as in all the preceding articles. That from Saint John is in these words: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Lord, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service."†

X. The evidence now opens upon us full and clear. Irenæus‡ succeeded Pothinus as bishop of Lyons. In his youth he had been a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John. In the time in which he lived, he was distant not much more than a century from the publication of the Gospels; in his instruction, only by one step separated from the persons of the apostles. He asserts of himself and his contemporaries, that they were able to reckon up, in all the principal churches, the succession of bishops from the first.§ I remark these particulars concerning Irenæus with more formality than usual; because the testimony which this writer affords to the historical books of the New Testament, to their authority, and to the titles which they bear, is express, positive, and exclusive. One principal passage, in which this testimony is contained, opens with a precise assertion of the point which we have laid down as the foundation of our argument, viz. that the story which the Gospels exhibit, is the story which the apostles told. "We have not received," saith Irenæus, "the knowledge of the way of our salvation by any others than those by whom the Gospel has been brought to us. Which Gospel they first preached, and afterwards, by the will of God, committed to writing, that it might be for time to come the foundation and pillar of our faith.—

* "Wherefore also our Lord Jesus Christ has said, in whatsoever I shall find you, in the same I will also judge you." Possibly Justin designed not to quote any text, but to represent the sense of many of our Lord's sayings. Fabricius has observed, that this saying has been quoted by many writers, and that Justin is the only one who ascribes it to our Lord, and that perhaps by a slip of his memory.

Words resembling these are read repeatedly in Ezekiel: "I will judge them according to their ways;" (chap. vii. 3; xxxiii. 20.) It is remarkable that Justin had just before expressly quoted Ezekiel. Mr. Jones upon this circumstance founded a conjecture, that Justin wrote only "the Lord hath said," intending to quote the words of God, or rather the sense of those words in Ezekiel; and that some transcriber, imagining these to be the words of Christ, inserted in his copy the addition "Jesus Christ." Vol. i. p. 539.

† Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 314.

* Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 332.

† John xvi. 2. ‡ Lardner, vol. i. p. 314.

§ Adv. Hæres. l. iii. c. 3.

For after that our Lord rose from the dead, and they (the apostles) were endowed from above with the power of the Holy Ghost coming down upon them, they received a perfect knowledge of all things. They then went forth to all the ends of the earth, declaring to men the blessing of heavenly peace, having all of them, and every one, alike the Gospel of God. Matthew, then among the Jews, wrote a Gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel at Rome, and founding a church there: and after their exit, Mark also, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us in writing the things that had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the Gospel preached by him (Paul.) Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon his breast, he likewise published a Gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia." If any modern divine should write a book upon the genuineness of the Gospels, he could not assert it more expressly, or state their original more distinctly, than Irenæus hath done within little more than a hundred years after they were published.

The correspondency, in the days of Irenæus, of the oral and written tradition, and the deduction of the oral tradition through various channels from the age of the apostles, which was then lately passed, and, by consequence, the probability that the books truly delivered what the apostles taught, is inferred also with strict regularity from another passage of his works. "The tradition of the apostles," this father saith, "hath spread itself over the whole universe; and all they, who search after the sources of truth, will find this tradition to be held sacred in every church. We might enumerate all those who have been appointed bishops to these churches by the apostles, and all their successors up to our days. It is by this uninterrupted succession that we have received the tradition which actually exists in the church, as also the doctrines of truth, as it was preached by the apostles."* The reader will observe upon this, that the same Irenæus, who is now stating the strength and uniformity of the tradition, we have before seen recognizing, in the fullest manner, the authority of the written records; from which we are entitled to conclude, that they were then conformable to each other.

I have said, that the testimony of Irenæus in favour of our Gospels is *exclusive* of all others. I allude to a remarkable passage in his works, in which for some reasons sufficiently fanciful, he endeavours to show, that there could be neither more nor fewer Gospels than *four*. With his argument we have no concern. The position itself, proves that four, and only four, Gospels were at that time publicly read and acknowledged. That these were our Gospels, and in the state in which we now have them, is shown, from many other places of this writer beside that which we have already alleged. He mentions how Matthew begins his Gospel, how Mark begins and ends his, and their supposed reasons for so doing. He enumerates at length the several passages of Christ's history in Luke, which are not found in any of the other evangelists. He states the particular design with which St. John composed his Gospel, and accounts for the doctrinal declarations which precede the narrative.

* Iren. in Hær. l. iii. c. 3

To the book of the Acts of the Apostles, its author, and credit, the testimony of Irenæus is no less explicit. Referring to the account of Saint Paul's conversion and vocation, in the ninth chapter of that book, "Nor can they," says he, meaning the parties with whom he argues, "show that he is not to be credited, who has related to us the truth with the greatest exactness." In another place, he has actually collected the several texts, in which the writer of the history is represented as accompanying St. Paul; which leads him to deliver a summary of almost the whole of the last twelve chapters of the book.

In an author thus abounding with references and allusions to the Scriptures, there is not one to any apocryphal Christian writing whatever. This is a broad line of distinction between our sacred books, and the pretensions of all others.

The force of the testimony of the period which we have considered, is greatly strengthened by the observation, that it is the testimony, and the concurring testimony, of writers who lived in countries remote from one another. Clement flourished at Rome, Ignatius at Antioch, Polycarp at Smyrna, Justin Martyr in Syria, and Irenæus in France.

XI. Omitting Athenagoras and Theophilus, who lived about this time;* in the remaining works of the former of whom are clear references to Mark and Luke; and in the works of the latter, who was bishop of Antioch, the sixth in succession from the apostles, evident allusions to Matthew and John, and probable allusions to Luke, (which, considering the nature of the compositions, that they were addressed to heathen readers, is as much as could be expected;) observing also, that the works of two learned Christian writers of the same age, Miltiades, and Pantænust are now lost; of which Miltiades, Eusebius records, that his writings "were monuments of zeal for the Divine Oracles;" and which Pantænus, as Jerome testifies, was a man of prudence and learning, both in the Divine Scriptures and secular literature, and had left many commentaries upon the Holy Scriptures then extant; passing by these without further remark, we come to one of the most voluminous of ancient Christian writers, Clement of Alexandria.‡ Clement followed Irenæus at the distance of only sixteen years, and therefore may be said to maintain the series of testimony in an uninterrupted continuation.

In certain of Clement's works now lost, but of which various parts are recited by Eusebius, there is given a distinct account of the order in which the four Gospels were written. The Gospels which contain the genealogies, were (he says) written first; Mark's next, at the instance of Peter's followers; and John's the last: and this account he tells us that he had received from presbyters of more ancient times. This testimony proves the following points; that these Gospels were the histories of Christ then publicly received, and relied upon; and that the dates, occasions, and circumstances of their publication, were at that time subjects of attention and inquiry amongst Christians. In the works of Clement which remain, the four Gospels are repeatedly quoted by the names of their authors, and the Acts of the Apos-

* Lardner, vol. i. p. 400. 422.
† Lardner, vol. i. p. 413. 450.
‡ Lardner, vol. ii. p. 469.

tles is expressly ascribed to Luke. In one place, after mentioning a particular circumstance; he adds these remarkable words: "We have not this passage *in the four Gospels delivered to us*, but in that according to the Egyptians;" which puts a marked distinction between the four Gospels and all other histories, or pretended histories, of Christ. In another part of his works, the perfect confidence, with which he received the Gospels, is signified by him in these words: "That this is true, appears from hence, that it is written in the Gospel according to St. Luke;" and again, "I need not use many words, but only to allege the evangelic voice of the Lord." His quotations are numerous. The sayings of Christ, of which he alleges many, are all taken from our Gospels; the single exception to this observation appearing to be a loose * quotation of a passage in Saint Matthew's Gospel.

XII. In the age in which they lived, † Tertullian joins on with Clement. The number of the Gospels then received, the names of the evangelists, and their proper descriptions, are exhibited by this writer in one short sentence: "Among the *apostles*, John and Matthew teach us the faith; among *apostolical men*, Luke and Mark refresh it." The next passage to be taken from Tertullian, affords as complete an attestation to the authenticity of our books as can be well imagined. After enumerating the churches which had been founded by Paul, at Corinth, in Galatia, at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Ephesus; the church of Rome established by Peter and Paul, and other churches derived from John; he proceeds thus:—"I say then, that with them, but not with them only which are apostolical, but with all who have fellowship with them in the same faith, is that Gospel of Luke received from its first publication, which we so zealously maintain:" and presently afterwards adds; "The same authority of the apostolical churches will support the other Gospels, which we have from them and according to them, I mean John's and Matthew's; although that likewise which Mark published may be said to be Peter's, whose interpreter Mark was." In another place Tertullian affirms, that the three other Gospels were in the hands of the churches from the beginning, as well as Luke's. This noble testimony fixes the universality with which the Gospels were received, and their antiquity; that they were in the hands of all, and had been so from the first. And this evidence appears not more than one hundred and fifty years after the publication of the books. The reader must be given to understand, that when Tertullian speaks of maintaining or defending (*tuendi*) the Gospel of Saint Luke, he only means maintaining or defending the integrity of the copies of Luke received by Christian churches, in opposition to certain curtailed copies used by Marcion, against whom he writes.

This author frequently cites the Acts of the Apostles under that title, once calls it Luke's Commentary, and observes how Saint Paul's epistles confirm it.

After this general evidence, it is unnecessary to add particular quotations. These, however, are so numerous and ample, as to have led Dr. Lardner to observe, "that there are more, and larger quotations of the small volume of the New Testament in this one Christian author, than there are of all the works of Cicero in writers of all characters for several ages." *

Tertullian quotes no Christian writing as of equal authority with the Scriptures, and no spurious books at all; a broad line of distinction, we may once more observe, between our sacred books and all others.

We may again likewise remark the wide extent through which the reputation of the Gospels, and of the Acts of the Apostles, had spread, and the perfect consent, in this point, of distant and independent societies. It is now only about one hundred and fifty years since Christ was crucified; and within this period, to say nothing of the apostolical fathers who have been noticed already, we have Justin Martyr at Neapolis, Theophilus at Antioch, Irenæus in France, Clement at Alexandria, Tertullian at Carthage, quoting the same books of historical Scriptures, and, I may say, quoting these alone.

XIII. An interval of only thirty years, and that occupied by no small number of Christian writers † whose works only remain in fragments and quotations, and in every one of which is some reference or other to the Gospels, (and in one of them, Hippolytus, as preserved in Theodoret, is an abstract of the whole Gospel history,) brings us to a name of great celebrity in Christian antiquity, Origen ‡ of Alexandria, who in the quantity of his writings, exceeded the most laborious of the Greek and Latin authors. Nothing can be more peremptory upon the subject now under consideration, and, from a writer of his learning and information, more satisfactory, than the declaration of Origen, preserved, in an extract from his works, by Eusebius; "That the four Gospels alone are received without dispute by the whole church of God under heaven:" to which declaration is immediately subjoined a brief history of the respective authors, to whom they were then, as they are now, ascribed. The language holden concerning the Gospels, throughout the works of Origen which remain, entirely corresponds with the testimony here cited. His attestation to the Acts of the Apostles is no less positive: "And Luke also once more sounds the trumpet, relating the acts of the apostles." The universality with which the Scriptures were then read, is well signified by this writer, in a passage in which he has occasion to observe against Celsus, "That it is not in any private books, or such as are read by a few only, and those studious persons, but in books read by every body, that it is written, The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by things that are made." It is to no purpose to single out quotations of Scripture from such a writer as this. We might as well make a selection of the quotations of Scripture in Dr. Clarke's Sermons. They are so

* "Ask great things, and the small shall be added unto you." Clement rather chose to expound the words of Matthew (chap. vi. 33,) than literally to cite them; and this is most undeniably proved by another place in the same Clement, where he both produces the text and these words as an exposition:—"Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, for these are the great things; but the small things, and things relating to this life, shall be added unto you."—Jones's New and Full Method, vol. i. p. 553.
Lardner, vol. ii. p. 561.

* Lardner, vol. ii. p. 647.
† Minucius Felix, Apollonius, Caius, Asterius, Urbanus, Alexander bishop of Jerusalem, Hippolytus, Ammonius, Julius Africanus.
‡ Lardner, vol. iii. p. 234.

thickly sown in the works of Origen, that Dr. Mill says, "If we had all his works remaining, we should have before us almost the whole text of the Bible."*

Origen notices, in order to censure, certain apocryphal Gospels. He also uses four writings of this sort; that is, throughout his large works he once or twice, at the most, quotes each of the four; but always with some mark, either of direct reprobation or of caution to his readers, manifestly esteeming them of little or no authority.

XIV. Gregory, bishop of Neocæsarea, and Dionysius of Alexandria, were scholars of Origen. Their testimony, therefore, though full and particular, may be reckoned a repetition only of his. The series, however, of evidence, is continued by Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who flourished within twenty years after Origen. "The church," says this father, "is watered, like Paradise, by four rivers, that is, by four Gospels." The Acts of the Apostles is also frequently quoted by Cyprian under that name, and under the name of the "Divine Scriptures." In his various writings are such constant and copious citations of Scripture, as to place this part of the testimony beyond controversy. Nor is there, in the works of this eminent African bishop, one quotation of a spurious or apocryphal Christian writing.

XV. Passing over a crowd† of writers following Cyprian at different distances, but all within forty years of his time; and who all, in the imperfect remains of their works, either cite the historical Scriptures of the New Testament, or speak of them in terms of profound respect; I single out Victorin, bishop of Pettaw in Germany, merely on account of the remoteness of his situation from that of Origen and Cyprian, who were Africans; by which circumstance his testimony, taken in conjunction with theirs, proves that the Scripture histories, and the same histories, were known and received from one side of the Christian world to the other. This bishop‡ lived about the year 290: and in a commentary upon this text of the Revelation, "The first was like a lion, the second was like a calf, the third like a man, and the fourth like a flying eagle," he makes out that by the four creatures are intended the four Gospels; and to show the propriety of the symbols, he recites the subject with which each evangelist opens his history. The explication is fanciful, but the testimony positive. He also expressly cites the Acts of the Apostles.

XVI. Arnobius and Lactantius,§ about the year 300, composed formal arguments upon the credibility of the Christian religion. As these arguments were addressed to Gentiles, the authors abstain from quoting Christian books *by name;* one of them giving this very reason for his reserve; but when they come to state, for the information of their readers, the outlines of Christ's history, it is apparent that they draw their accounts from our Gospels, and from no other sources; for these statements exhibit a summary of almost every thing which is related of Christ's actions and miracles by the four evangelists. Arnobius vindicates, without mentioning their names, the credit of these historians; observing, that they were eye-witnesses of the facts which they relate, and that their ignorance of the arts of composition was rather a confirmation of their testimony, than an objection to it. Lactantius also argues in defence of the religion, from the consistency, simplicity, disinterestedness, and sufferings of the Christian historians, meaning by that term our evangelists.

XVII. We close the series of testimonies with that of Eusebius,* bishop of Cæsarea, who flourished in the year 315, contemporary with, or posterior only by fifteen years to, the two authors last cited. This voluminous writer, and most diligent collector of the writings of others, beside a variety of large works, composed a history of the affairs of Christianity from its origin to his own time. His testimony to the Scriptures is the testimony of a man much conversant in the works of Christian authors, written during the first three centuries of its era, and who had read many which are now lost. In a passage of his Evangelical Demonstration, Eusebius remarks, with great nicety, the delicacy of two of the evangelists in their manner of noticing any circumstance which regarded themselves; and of Mark, as writing under Peter's direction, in the circumstances which regarded him. The illustration of this remark leads him to bring together long quotations from each of the evangelists; and the whole passage is a proof, that Eusebius, and the Christians of those days, not only read the Gospels, but studied them with attention and exactness. In a passage of his Ecclesiastical History, he treats, in form, and at large, of the occasions of writing the four Gospels, and of the order in which they were written. The title of the chapter is, "Of the Order of the Gospels;" and it begins thus: "Let us observe the writings of this apostle John, which are not contradicted by any; and, first of all, must be mentioned, as acknowledged by all, the Gospel according to him, well known to all the churches under heaven; and that it has been justly placed by the ancients the fourth in order, and after the other three, may be made evident in this manner."—Eusebius then proceeds to show that John wrote the last of the four, and that his Gospel was intended to supply the omissions of the others; especially in the part of our Lord's ministry, which took place before the imprisonment of John the Baptist. He observes, "that the apostles of Christ were not studious of the ornaments of composition, nor indeed forward to write at all, being wholly occupied with their ministry."

This learned author makes no use at all of Christian writings, forged with the names of Christ's apostles, or their companions.

We close this branch of our evidence here, because, after Eusebius, there is no room for any question upon the subject; the works of Christian writers being as full of texts of Scripture, and of references to Scripture, as the discourses of modern divines. Future testimonies to the books of Scripture could only prove that they never lost their character or authority.

SECTION II.

When the Scriptures are quoted, or alluded to, they are quoted with peculiar respect, as books

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* Mill, Proleg. cap. vi. p. 66.

† Novatus, Rome, A. D. 251; Dionysius, Rome, A. D. 259; Commodian, A. D. 270; Anatolius, Laodicea, A. D. 270; Theognostus, A. D. 282; Methodius, Lycia, A. D. 290; Phileas, Egypt, A. D. 296.

‡ Lardner, vol. v. p. 214. § Ib. vol. vii. p. 43. 201.

* Lardner, vol. viii. p. 33.

sui generis; *as possessing an authority which belonged to no other books, and as conclusive in all questions and controversies amongst Christians.*

Beside the general strain of reference and quotation, which uniformly and strongly indicates this distinction, the following may be regarded as specific testimonies:

I. Theophilus,* bishop of Antioch, the sixth in succession from the apostles, and who flourished little more than a century after the books of the New Testament were written, having occasion to quote one of our Gospels, writes thus: "These things the Holy Scriptures teach us, and all who were moved by the Holy Spirit, among whom John says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." Again: "Concerning the righteousness which the law teaches, the like things are to be found in the Prophets and the *Gospels*, because that all, being inspired, spoke by one and the same Spirit of God."† No words can testify more strongly than these do, the high and peculiar respect in which these books were holden.

II. A writer against Artemon,‡ who may be supposed to come about one hundred and fifty-eight years after the publication of the Scripture, in a passage quoted by Eusebius, uses these expressions: "Possibly what they (our adversaries) say, might have been credited, *if first of all* the Divine Scriptures did not contradict them; *and then* the writings of certain brethren more ancient than the times of Victor." The brethren mentioned by name, are Justin, Miltiades, Tatian, Clement, Irenæus, Melito, with a general appeal to many more not named. This passage proves, first, that there was at that time a collection called *Divine Scriptures;* secondly, that these Scriptures were esteemed of higher authority than the writings of the most early and celebrated Christians.

III. In a piece ascribed to Hippolytus,§ who lived near the same time, the author professes, in giving his correspondent instruction in the things about which he inquires, "to draw out of the *sacred fountain*, and to set before him from the Sacred Scriptures, what may afford him satisfaction." He then quotes immediately Paul's epistles to Timothy, and afterwards many books of the New Testament. This preface to the quotations carries in it a marked distinction between the Scriptures and other books.

IV. "*Our* assertions and discourses," saith Origen,‖ "are unworthy of credit; we must receive the *Scriptures* as witnesses." After treating of the duty of prayer, he proceeds with his argument thus: "What we have said, may be proved from the Divine Scriptures." In his books against Celsus, we find this passage: "That our religion teaches us to seek after wisdom, shall be shown, both out of the ancient Jewish Scriptures, which we also use, and out of those written since Jesus, which are believed in the churches to be divine." These expressions afford abundant evidence of the peculiar and exclusive authority which the Scriptures possessed.

V. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage,¶ whose age lies close to that of Origen, earnestly exhorts Christian teachers, in all doubtful cases, "to go back to the *fountain;* and if the truth has in any case been shaken, to recur to the Gospels and apostolic writings."—The precepts of the Gospel," says he in another place, "are nothing less than authoritative divine lessons, the foundations of our hope, the supports of our faith, the guides of our way, the safeguards of our course to heaven."

VI. Novatus,* a Roman, contemporary with Cyprian, appeals to the Scriptures, as the authority by which all errors were to be repelled, and disputes decided. "That Christ is not only man, but God also, is proved by the sacred authority of the Divine Writings."—"The Divine Scripture easily detects and confutes the frauds of heretics."—"It is not by the fault of the heavenly Scriptures, which never deceive." Stronger assertions than these could not be used.

VII. At the distance of twenty years from the writer last cited, Anatolius,† a learned Alexandrian, and bishop of Laodicea, speaking of the rule for keeping Easter, a question at that day agitated with much earnestness, says of those whom he opposed, "They can by no means prove their point by the authority of the Divine Scripture."

VIII. The Arians, who sprung up about fifty years after this, argued strenuously against the use of the words consubstantial and essence, and like phrases; "*because they were not in Scripture.*"‡ And in the same strain one of their advocates opens a conference with Augustine, after the following manner: "If you say what is reasonable, I must submit. If you allege any thing from the Divine Scriptures, which are common to both, I must hear. But unscriptural expressions (quæ extra Scripturam sunt) deserve no regard."

Athanasius, the great antagonist of Arianism, after having enumerated the books of the Old and New Testament, adds, "These are the fountain of salvation, that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the oracles contained in them. In these alone the doctrine of salvation is proclaimed. Let no man add to them or take any thing from them."§

IX. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem,‖ who wrote about twenty years after the appearance of Arianism, uses these remarkable words:—"Concerning the divine and holy mysteries of faith, not the least article ought to be delivered without the Divine Scriptures." We are assured that Cyril's Scriptures were the same as ours, for he has left us a catalogue of the books included under that name.

X. Epiphanius,¶ twenty years after Cyril, challenges the Arians, and the followers of Origen, "to produce any passage of the Old and New Testament, favouring their sentiments."

XI. Pœbadius, a Gallic bishop, who lived about thirty years after the council of Nice, testifies, that "the bishops of that council first consulted the sacred volumes, and then declared their faith."**

XII. Basil, bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, contemporary with Epiphanius, says, "that hearers instructed in the Scriptures ought to examine what is said by their teachers, and to embrace

* Lardner, Cred. part ii. vol. i. p. 429.
† Ib. vol. i. p. 448.
‡ Ib. vol. iii. p. 40.
§ Ib. vol. iii. p. 112.
‖ Ib. vol. iii. p. 237—289.
¶ Ib. vol. iv. p. 840.

* Lardner, Cred. vol. v. p. 102.
† Ib. p. 146.
‡ Ib. vol. vii. p. 283, 284.
§ Ib. vol. xii. p. 182.
‖ Ib. vol. viii. p. 276.
¶ Ib. vol. viii. p. 314.
** Ib. vol. ix. p. 52.

what is agreeable to the Scriptures, and to reject what is otherwise."*

XIII. Ephraim, the Syrian, a celebrated writer of the same times, bears this conclusive testimony to the proposition which forms the subject of our present chapter: "The truth written in the Sacred Volume of the Gospel, is a perfect rule. Nothing can be taken from it nor added to it, without great guilt."†

XIV. If we add Jerome to these, it is only for the evidence which he affords of the judgment of preceding ages. Jerome observes, concerning the quotations of *ancient* Christian writers, that is, of writers who were *ancient* in the year 400, that they made a distinction between books; some they quoted as of authority, and others not: which observation relates to the books of Scripture, compared with other writings, apocryphal or heathen.‡

SECTION III.

The Scriptures were in very early times collected into a distinct volume.

Ignatius, who was bishop of Antioch within forty years after the Ascension, and who had lived and conversed with the apostles, speaks of the Gospel and of the apostles in terms which render it very probable that he meant by the Gospel, the book or volume of the Gospels, and by the Apostles, the book or volume of their Epistles. His words in one place are,§ "Fleeing to the Gospel as the flesh of Jesus, and to the apostles as the presbytery of the church;" that is, as Le Clerc interprets them, "in order to understand the will of God, he fled to the Gospels, which he believed no less than if Christ in the flesh had been speaking to him; and to the writings of the apostles, whom he esteemed as the presbytery of the whole Christian church." It must be observed, that about eighty years after this, we have direct proof in the writings of Clement of Alexandria,‖ that these two names, "Gospel," and "Apostles," were the names by which the writings of the New Testament, and the division of these writings, were usually expressed.

Another passage from Ignatius is the following: —"But the Gospel has somewhat in it more excellent, the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, his passion and resurrection."¶

And a third: "Ye ought to hearken to the Prophets, but especially to the Gospel, in which the passion has been manifested to us, and the resurrection perfected." In this last passage, the Prophets and the Gospel are put in conjunction; and as Ignatius undoubtedly meant by the Prophets a collection of writings, it is probable that he meant the same by the Gospel, the two terms standing in evident parallelism with each other.

This interpretation of the word "Gospel," in the passages above quoted from Ignatius, is confirmed by a piece of nearly equal antiquity, the relation of the martyrdom of Polycarp by the church of Smyrna. "All things," say they, "that went before, were done, that the Lord might show us a martyrdom according to the Gospel, for he expected to be delivered up as the Lord also did."* And in another place, "We do not commend those who offer themselves, forasmuch as the Gospel teaches us no such thing."† In both these places, what is called the *Gospels*, seems to be the history of Jesus Christ, and of his doctrine.

If this be the true sense of the passages, they are not only evidences of our propositions, but strong and very ancient proofs of the high esteem in which the books of the New Testament were holden.

II. Eusebius relates, that Quadratus and some others, who were the immediate successors of the apostles, travelling abroad to preach Christ, carried the Gospels with them, and delivered them to their converts. The words of Eusebius are: "Then travelling abroad, they performed the work of evangelists, being ambitious to preach Christ, and *deliver the Scripture of the divine Gospels.*"‡ Eusebius had before him the writings both of Quadratus himself, and of many others of that age, which are now lost. It is reasonable, therefore, to believe, that he had good grounds for his assertion. What is thus recorded of the Gospels, took place within sixty, or, at the most, seventy years after they were published: and it is evident that they must, before this time (and, it is probable, long before this time,) have been in general use, and in high esteem in the churches planted by the apostles, inasmuch as they were now, we find, collected into a volume; and the immediate successors of the apostles, they who preached the religion of Christ to those who had not already heard it, carried the volume with them, and delivered it to their converts.

III. Irenæus, in the year 178,§ puts the evangelic and apostolic writings in connexion with the Law and the Prophets, manifestly intending by the one a code or collection of Christian sacred writings, as the other expressed the code or collection of Jewish sacred writings. And,

IV. Melito, at this time bishop of Sardis, writing to one Onesimus, tells his correspondent,‖ that he had procured an accurate account of the books of the Old Testament. The occurrence, in this passage, of the term *Old* Testament, has been brought to prove, and it certainly does prove, that there was then a volume or collection of writings called the *New* Testament.

V. In the time of Clement of Alexandria, about fifteen years after the last-quoted testimony, it is apparent that the Christian Scriptures were divided into two parts, under the general titles of the Gospels and Apostles; and that both these were regarded as of the highest authority. One, out of many expressions of Clement, alluding to this distribution, is the following:—"There is a consent and harmony between the Law and the Prophets, the Apostles and the Gospel."¶

VI. The same division, "Prophets, Gospels, and Apostles," appears in Tertullian,** the contemporary of Clement. The collection of the Gospels is likewise called by this writer the "Evangelic Instrument;"†† the whole volume, the "New Testament:" and the two parts, the "Gospels and Apostles."‡‡

* Lardner, Cred. vol. ix. p. 124.
† Ib. vol. ix. p. 202.
‡ Ib. vol. x. p. 123, 124.
§ Ib. part ii. vol. i. p. 180.
‖ Ib. vol. ii. p. 516.
¶ Ib. vol. ii. p. 182.

* Ignat. Ep. c. i.
† Ib. c. iv.
‡ Lardner, Cred. part ii. vol. i. p. 236.
§ Ib. vol. i. p. 383.
‖ Ib. p. 331.
¶ Ib. vol. ii. p. 516.
** Ib. p. 631.
†† Ib. p. 574.
‡‡ Ib. p. 632.

VII. From many writers also of the third century, and especially from Cyprian, who lived in the middle of it, it is collected that the Christian Scriptures were divided into two codes, or volumes, one called the "Gospels or Scriptures of the Lord," the other, the "Apostles, or Epistles of the Apostles."*

VIII. Eusebius, as we have already seen, takes some pains to show, that the Gospel of Saint John had been justly placed by the ancients "the fourth in order, and after the other three.† These are the terms of his proposition: and the very introduction of such an argument proves incontestably, that the four Gospels had been collected into a volume, to the exclusion of every other; that their order in the volume had been adjusted with much consideration; and that this had been done by those who were called ancients in the time of Eusebius.

In the Diocletian persecution, in the year 303, the Scriptures were sought out and burnt: ‡ many suffered death rather than deliver them up; and those who betrayed them to the persecutors, were accounted as lapse and apostate. On the other hand, Constantine, after his conversion, gave directions for multiplying copies of the Divine Oracles, and for magnificently adorning them at the expense of the imperial treasury. § What the Christians of that age so richly embellished in their prosperity, and, which is more, so tenaciously preserved under persecution, was the very volume of the New Testament which we now read.

SECTION IV.

Our present Sacred Writings were soon distinguished by appropriate names and titles of respect.

Polycarp. "I trust that ye are well exercised in the *Holy Scriptures;*—as in these Scriptures it is said, Be ye angry and sin not, and let not the sun go down on your wrath." ‖ This passage is extremely important; because it proves that, in the time of Polycarp, who had lived with the apostles, there were Christian writings distinguished by the name of "Holy Scriptures," or *Sacred* Writings. Moreover, the text quoted by Polycarp is a text found in the collection at this day. What also the same Polycarp hath elsewhere quoted in the same manner, may be considered as proved to belong to the collection; and this comprehends Saint Matthew's, and, probably, Saint Luke's Gospel, the Acts of the Apostles, ten epistles of Paul, the First Epistle of Peter, and the First of John.¶ In another place, Polycarp has these words: "Whoever perverts the *Oracles of the Lord* to his own lusts, and says there is neither resurrection nor judgment, he is the first-born of Satan."**—It does not appear what else Polycarp could mean by the "Oracles of the Lord," but those same "Holy Scriptures," or Sacred Writings, of which he had spoken before.

II. Justin Martyr, whose apology was written about thirty years after Polycarp's epistle, expressly cites some of our present histories under the title of Gospel, and that not as a name by him first ascribed to them, but as the name by which they were generally known in his time. His words are these:—"For the apostles in the memoirs composed by them, *which are called Gospels*, have thus delivered it, that Jesus commanded them to take bread, and give thanks." * There exists no doubt, but that, by the memoirs above mentioned, Justin meant our present historical Scriptures; for throughout his works, he quotes these, and no others.

III. Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, who came thirty years after Justin, in a passage preserved in Eusebius, (for his works are lost,) speaks of "the Scriptures of the Lord." †

IV. And at the same time, or very nearly so, by Irenæus, bishop of Lyons in France, ‡ they are called "Divine Scriptures,"—"Divine Oracles,"—"Scriptures of the Lord,"—"Evangelic and Apostolic Writings." § The quotations of Irenæus prove decidedly, that our present Gospels, and these alone, together with the Acts of the Apostles, were the historical books comprehended by him under these appellations.

V. Saint Matthew's Gospel is quoted by Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, contemporary with Irenæus, under the title of the "Evangelic Voice;" ‖ and the copious works of Clement of Alexandria, published within fifteen years of the same time, ascribed to the books of the New Testament the various titles of "Sacred Books,"—"Divine Scriptures,"—"Divinely inspired Scriptures,"—"Scriptures of the Lord,"—"the true Evangelical Canon." ¶

VI. Tertullian, who joins on with Clement, beside adopting most of the names and epithets above noticed, calls the Gospels "our Digestia," in allusion, as it should seem, to some collection of Roman laws then extant. **

VII. By Origen, who came thirty years after Tertullian, the same, and other no less strong titles, are applied to the Christian Scriptures: and, in addition thereunto, this writer frequently speaks of the "Old and New Testament,"—"the Ancient and New Scriptures,"—"the Ancient and New Oracles." ††

VIII. In Cyprian, who was not twenty years later, they are "Books of the Spirit,"—"Divine Fountains,"—"Fountains of the Divine Fulness." ‡‡

The expressions we have thus quoted, are evidences of high and peculiar respect. They all occur within two centuries from the publication of the books. Some of them commence with the companions of the apostles; and they increase in number and variety, through a series of writers touching one upon another, and deduced from the first age of the religion.

SECTION V.

Our Scriptures were publicly read and expounded in the religious assemblies of the early Christians.

* Lardner, vol. iv. p. 846. † Ib. vol. viii. p. 90.
‡ Ib. vol. vii. p. 214, &c. § Ib. p. 432.
‖ Ib. vol. i. p. 203. ¶ Ib. vol. i. p. 223.
** Ib. p. 222.

* Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 271. † Ib. p. 298.
‡ The reader will observe the remoteness of these two writers in country and situation.
§ Lardner, vol. i. p. 343, &c. ‖ Ib. p. 427.
¶ Ib. vol. ii. p. 515. ** Ib. p. 630.
†† Ib. vol. iii. p. 230. ‡‡ Ib. vol. iv. p. 844.

Justin Martyr, who wrote in the year 140, which was seventy or eighty years after some, and less, probably, after others of the Gospels were published, giving, in his first apology, an account, to the emperor, of the Christian worship, has this remarkable passage:

"The *Memoirs of the Apostles*, or the Writings of the Prophets, are *read* according as the time allows: and, when the reader has ended, the president makes a discourse, exhorting to the imitation of so excellent things." *

A few short observations will show the value of this testimony.

1. The "Memoirs of the Apostles," Justin in another place expressly tells us, are what are called "Gospels:" and that they were the Gospels which we now use, is made certain by Justin's numerous quotations of *them*, and his silence about any others.

2. Justin describes the general usage of the Christian church.

3. Justin does not speak of it as recent or newly instituted, but in the terms in which men speak of established customs.

II. Tertullian, who followed Justin at the distance of about fifty years, in his account of the religious assemblies of Christians as they were conducted in his time, says, "We come together to recollect the Divine Scriptures; we nourish our faith, raise our hope, confirm our trust, by the Sacred Word." †

III. Eusebius records of Origen, and cites for his authority the letters of bishops contemporary with Origen, that, when he went into Palestine about the year 216, which was only sixteen years after the date of Tertullian's testimony, he was desired by the bishops of that country to discourse and expound the Scriptures publicly in the church, though he was not yet ordained a presbyter. ‡ This anecdote recognises the usage, not only of reading, but of expounding the Scriptures; and both as subsisting in full force. Origen also himself bears witness to the same practice: "This," says he, "we do, when the Scriptures are read in the church, and when the discourse for explication is delivered to the people." § And what is a still more ample testimony, many homilies of his upon the Scriptures of the New Testament, delivered by him in the assemblies of the church, are still extant.

IV. Cyprian, whose age was not twenty years lower than that of Origen, gives his people an account of having ordained two persons, who were before confessors, to be readers; and what they were to read, appears by the reason which he gives for his choice: "Nothing," says Cyprian, "can be more fit, than that he, who has made a glorious confession of the Lord, should read publicly in the church; that he who has shown himself willing to die a martyr, should read the *Gospel of Christ*, by which martyrs are made." ‖

V. Intimations of the same custom may be traced in a great number of writers in the beginning and throughout the whole of the fourth century. Of these testimonies I will only use one, as being, of itself, express and full. Augustine, who appeared near the conclusion of the century, displays the benefit of the Christian religion on this very account, the public reading of the Scriptures in the churches, "where," says he, "is a confluence of all sorts of people of both sexes; and where they hear how they ought to live well in this world, that they may deserve to live happily and eternally in another." And this custom he declares to be universal: "The canonical books of Scripture being read every where, the miracles therein recorded are well known to all people." *

It does not appear that any books, other than our present Scriptures, were thus publicly read, except that the epistle of Clement was read in the church of Corinth, to which it had been addressed, and in some others; and that the Shepherd of Hermas was read in many churches. Nor does it subtract much from the value of the argument, that these two writings partly come within it, because we allow them to be the genuine writings of apostolical men. There is not the least evidence, that any other Gospel, than the four which we receive, was ever admitted to this distinction.

* Lardner, Cred. vol. i. p. 273.
† Ib. vol. ii. p. 628. ‡ Ib. vol. iii. p. 68.
§ Ib. p. 302. ‖ Ib. vol. iv. p. 842.

SECTION VI.

Commentaries were anciently written upon the Scriptures; harmonies formed out of them; different copies carefully collated; and versions made of them into different languages.

No greater proof can be given of the esteem in which these books were holden by the ancient Christians, or of the sense then entertained of their value and importance, than the industry bestowed upon them. And it ought to be observed, that the value and importance of these books consisted entirely in their genuineness and truth. There was nothing in them, as works of taste, or as compositions, which could have induced any one to have written a note upon them. Moreover it shows that they were even *then* considered as ancient books. Men do not write comments upon publications of their own times: therefore the testimonies cited under this head, afford an evidence which carries up the evangelic writings much beyond the age of the testimonies themselves, and to that of their reputed authors.

I. Tatian, a follower of Justin Martyr, and who flourished about the year 170, composed a harmony, or collation of the Gospels, which he called *Diatessaron*, Of the four.† The title, as well as the work, is remarkable; because it shows that then, as now, there were four, and only four, Gospels in general use with Christians. And this was little more than a hundred years after the publication of some of them.

II. Pantænus, of the Alexandrian school, a man of great reputation and learning, who came twenty years after Tatian, wrote many commentaries upon the Holy Scriptures, which, as Jerome testifies, were extant in his time.‡

III. Clement of Alexandria wrote short explications of many books of the Old and New Testament. §

IV. Tertullian appeals from the authority of a later version, then in use, to the authentic Greek. ‖

V. An anonymous author, quoted by Eusebius,

* Lardner, Cred. vol. x. p. 276, *et seq.*
† Ib. vol. i. p. 307. ‡ Ib. p. 455.
§ Ib. vol. ii. p. 462. ‖ Ib. p. 638.

and who appears to have written about the year 212, appeals to the *ancient copies* of the Scriptures, in refutation of some corrupt readings alleged by the followers of Artemon.*

VI. The same Eusebius, mentioning by name several writers of the church who lived at this time, and concerning whom he says, "There still remain divers monuments of the laudable industry of those ancient and ecclesiastical men" (*i. e.* of Christian writers who were considered as ancient in the year 300,) adds, "There are, besides, treatises of many others, whose names we have not been able to learn, orthodox and ecclesiastical men, as the interpretations of the Divine Scriptures given by each of them show."†

VII. The last five testimonies may be referred to the year 200; immediately after which, a period of thirty years gives us.

Julius Africanus, who wrote an epistle upon the apparent difference in the genealogies in Matthew and Luke, which he endeavours to reconcile by the distinction of natural and legal descent, and conducts his hypothesis with great industry through the whole series of generations.‡

Ammonius, a learned Alexandrian, who composed, as Tatian had done, a harmony of *the four Gospels;* which proves, as Tatian's work did, that there were four Gospels, and no more, at this time in use in the church. It affords also an instance of the zeal of Christians for those writings, and of their solicitude about them.§

And, above both these, Origen, who wrote commentaries, or homilies, upon most of the books included in the New Testament, and upon no other books but these. In particular, he wrote upon Saint John's Gospel, very largely upon Saint Matthew's, and commentaries, or homilies, upon the Acts of the Apostles.‖

VIII. In addition to these, the third century likewise contains

Dionysius of Alexandria, a very learned man, who compared, with great accuracy, the accounts in the four Gospels of the time of Christ's resurrection, adding a reflection which showed his opinion of their authority: "Let us not think that the evangelists disagree, or contradict each other, although there be some small difference; but let us honestly and faithfully endeavour to reconcile what we read."¶

Victorin, bishop of Pettaw, in Germany, who wrote comments upon Saint Matthew's Gospel.**

Lucian, a presbyter of Antioch; and Hesychius, an Egyptian bishop, who put forth editions of the New Testament.

IX. The fourth century supplies a catalogue†† of fourteen writers, who expended their labours upon the books of the New Testament, and whose works or names are come down to our times; amongst which number it may be sufficient, for the purpose of showing the sentiments and studies of learned Christians of that age, to notice the following:

Eusebius, in the very beginning of the century, wrote expressly upon the discrepancies observable in the Gospels, and likewise a treatise, in which he pointed out what things are related by four, what by three, what by two, and what by one evangelist.* This author also testifies what is certainly a material piece of evidence, "that the writings of the apostles had obtained such an esteem, as to be translated into every language both of Greeks and Barbarians, and to be diligently studied by all nations."† This testimony was given about the year 300; how long *before* that date these translations were made, does not appear.

Damasus, bishop of Rome, corresponded with Saint Jerome upon the exposition of difficult texts of Scripture; and, in a letter still remaining, desires Jerome to give him a clear explanation of the word Hosanna, found in the New Testament; "he (Damasus) having met with very different interpretations of it in the Greek and Latin commentaries of Catholic writers which he had read."‡ This last clause shows the number and variety of commentaries then extant.

Gregory of Nyssen, at one time, appeals to the most exact copies of Saint Mark's Gospel; at another time, compares together, and proposes to reconcile, the several accounts of the resurrection *given by the four Evangelists;* which limitation proves, that there were no other histories of Christ deemed authentic beside these, or included in the same character with these. This writer observes, acutely enough, that the disposition of the clothes in the sepulchre, the napkin that was about our Saviour's head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself, did not bespeak the terror and hurry of thieves, and therefore refutes the story of the body being stolen.§

Ambrose, bishop of Milan, remarked various readings in the Latin copies of the New Testament, and appeals to the original Greek;

And Jerome, towards the conclusion of this century, put forth an edition of the New Testament in Latin, corrected, at least as to the Gospels, by Greek copies, "and those (he says) ancient."

Lastly, Chrysostom, it is well known, delivered and published a great many homilies, or sermons, upon the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

It is needless to bring down this article lower: but it is of importance to add, that there is no example of Christian writers of the first three centuries composing comments upon any other books than those which are found in the New Testament, except the single one of Clement of Alexandria commenting upon a book called the Revelation of Peter.

Of the *ancient versions* of the New Testament, one of the most valuable is the Syriac. Syriac was the language of Palestine when Christianity was there first established. And although the books of Scripture were written in Greek, for the purpose of a more extended circulation than within the precincts of Judea, yet it is probable that they would soon be translated into the vulgar language of the country where the religion first prevailed. Accordingly, a Syriac translation is now extant, all along, so far as it appears, used by the inhabitants of Syria, bearing many internal marks of

* Lardner, Cred. vol. iii. p. 46.
† Ib. vol. ii. p. 551.
‡ Ib. vol. iii. p. 170.
§ Ib. vol. iii. p. 122.
‖ Ib. vol. iii. p. 352. 192. 202. 246.
¶ Ib. vol. iv. p. 166.
** Ib. p. 195.

†† Eusebius, A. D. - 315
Juvencus, Spain, - 330
Theodore, Thrace, - 334
Hilary, Poictiers, - 354
Fortunatus, - - 340
Apollinarius of Laodicea, - - 362
Damasus, Rome, 366
Gregory, Nyssen, - 371
Didimus of Alex, - 370
Ambrose of Milan, 374
Diodore of Tarsus, 378
Gaudent of Brescia, 387
Theodore of Cilicia 394
Jerome, - - - 392
Chrysostom, - - 398

* Lardner, Cred. vol. viii. p. 46.
† Ib. p. 201.
‡ Ib. vol. ix. p. 108.
§ Ib. p. 163

high antiquity, supported in its pretensions by the uniform traditions of the East, and confirmed by the discovery of many very ancient manuscripts in the libraries of Europe. It is about 200 years since a bishop of Antioch sent a copy of this translation into Europe, to be printed; and this seems to be the first time that the translation became generally known to these parts of the world. The bishop of Antioch's Testament was found to contain all our books, except the second epistle of Peter, the second and third of John, and the Revelation; which books, however, have since been discovered in that language in some ancient manuscripts of Europe. But in this collection, no other book, beside what is in ours, appears ever to have had a place. And, which is very worthy of observation, the text, though preserved in a remote country, and without communication with ours, differs from ours very little, and in nothing that is important.*

SECTION VII.

Our Scriptures were received by ancient Christians of different sects and persuasions, by many Heretics as well as Catholics, and were usually appealed to by both sides in the controversies which arose in those days.

THE three most ancient topics of controversy amongst Christians, were, the authority of the Jewish constitution, the origin of evil, and the nature of Christ. Upon the first of these we find, in very early times, one class of heretics rejecting the Old Testament entirely; another contending for the obligation of its law, in all its parts, throughout its whole extent, and over every one who sought acceptance with God. Upon the two latter subjects, a natural, perhaps, and venial, but a fruitless, eager, and impatient curiosity, prompted by the philosophy and by the scholastic habits of the age, which carried men much into bold hypotheses and conjectural solutions, raised, amongst some who professed Christianity, very wild and unfounded opinions. I think there is no reason to believe that the number of these bore any considerable proportion to the body of the Christian church; and amidst the disputes which such opinions necessarily occasioned, it is a great satisfaction to perceive, what, in a vast plurality of instances, we do perceive, all sides recurring to the same Scriptures.

† I. Basilides lived near the age of the apostles, about the year 120, or, perhaps, sooner.‡ He rejected the Jewish institution, not as spurious, but as proceeding from a being inferior to the true God; and in other respects advanced a scheme of theology widely different from the general doctrine of the Christian church, and which, as it gained over some disciples, was warmly opposed by Christian writers of the second and third century. In these writings, there is positive evidence that Basilides received the Gospel of Matthew; and there is no sufficient proof that he rejected any of the other three: on the contrary, it appears that he wrote a commentary upon the Gospel, so copious as to be divided into twenty-four books.*

II. The Valentinians appeared about the same time.† Their heresy consisted in certain notions concerning angelic natures, which can hardly be rendered intelligible to a modern reader. They seem, however, to have acquired as much importance as any of the separatists of that early age. Of this sect, Irenæus, who wrote, A. D. 172, expressly records that they endeavoured to fetch arguments for their opinions from the evangelic and apostolic writings. ‡ Heracleon, one of the most celebrated of the sect, and who lived probably so early as the year 125, wrote commentaries upon Luke and John.§ Some observations also of his upon Matthew are preserved by Origen.‖ Nor is there any reason to doubt that he received the whole New Testament.

III. The Carpocratians were also an early heresy, little, if at all, later than the two preceding.¶ Some of their opinions resembled what we at this day mean by Socinianism. With respect to the Scriptures, they are specifically charged, by Irenæus and by Epiphanius, with endeavouring to pervert a passage in Matthew, which amounts to a positive proof that they received that Gospel.** Negatively, they are not accused, by their adversaries, of rejecting any part of the New Testament.

IV. The Sethians, A. D. 150;†† the Montanists, A. D. 156;‡‡ the Marcosians, A. D. 160;§§ Hermogenes, A. D. 180;‖‖ Praxias, A. D. 196;¶¶ Artemon, A. D. 200;*** Theodotus, A. D. 200; all included under the denomination of heretics, and all engaged in controversies with Catholic Christians, received the Scriptures of the New Testament.

V. Tatian, who lived in the year 172, went into many extravagant opinions, was the founder of a sect called Encratites, and was deeply involved in disputes with the Christians of that age; yet Tatian so received the four Gospels, as to compose a harmony from them.

VI. From a writer, quoted by Eusebius, of about the year 300, it is apparent that they who at that time contended for the mere humanity of Christ, argued from the Scriptures; for they are accused by this writer, of making alterations in their copies, in order to favour their opinions.†††

VII. Origen's sentiments excited great controversies,—the bishops of Rome and Alexandria, and many others, condemning, the bishops of the East espousing them; yet there is not the smallest question, but that both the advocates and adversaries of these opinions acknowledged the same authority of Scripture. In his time, which the reader will remember was about one hundred and fifty years after the Scriptures were published, many dissensions subsisted amongst Christians, with which they were reproached by Celsus; yet Origen, who has recorded this accusation without contradicting it, nevertheless testifies, that the four Gospels were received *without dispute*, by the whole church of God under heaven.‡‡‡

* Jones on the Canon, vol. i. c. 14.

† The materials of the former part of this section are taken from Dr. Lardner's History of the Heretics of the two first Centuries, published since his death, with additions, by the Rev. Mr. Hogg, of Exeter, and inserted into the ninth volume of his works, of the edition of 1778.

‡ Lardner, vol. ix. ed. 1788, p. 271.

* Lardner, vol. ix. ed. 1788, p. 305, 306.

† Ib. p. 350, 351.

‡ Ib. vol. i. p. 383.

§ Ib. vol. ix. ed. 1788, p. 352.

‖ Ib. p. 353.

¶ Ib. 309.

** Ib. 318.

†† Ib. 455.

‡‡ Ib. 482.

§§ Ib. 348.

‖‖ Ib. 473.

¶¶ Ib. 433.

*** Ib. 466.

††† Ib. vol. iii. p. 46.

‡‡‡ Ib. vol. iv. p. 642.

VIII. Paul of Samosata, about thirty years after Origen, so distinguished himself in the controversy concerning the nature of Christ, as to be the subject of two councils or synods, assembled at Antioch upon his opinions. Yet he is not charged by his adversaries with rejecting any book of the New Testament. On the contrary, Epiphanius, who wrote a history of heretics a hundred years afterward, says, that Paul endeavoured to support his doctrine by texts of Scripture. And Vincentius Lirinensis, A. D. 434, speaking of Paul and other heretics of the same age, has these words: "Here, perhaps, some one may ask, whether heretics also urge the testimony of Scripture. They urge it indeed, explicitly and vehemently; for you may see them flying through every book of the sacred law."*

IX. A controversy at the same time existed with the Noetians or Sabellians, who seem to have gone into the opposite extreme from that of Paul of Samosata and his followers. Yet, according to the express testimony of Epiphanius, Sabellius received all the Scriptures. And with both sects Catholic writers constantly allege the Scriptures, and reply to the arguments which their opponents drew from particular texts.

We have here, therefore, a proof, that parties, who were the most opposite and irreconcilable to one another, acknowledged the authority of Scripture with equal deference.

X. And as a general testimony to the same point, may be produced what was said by one of the bishops of the council of Carthage, which was holden a little before this time,—"I am of opinion that the blasphemous and wicked heretics, who *pervert* the sacred and adorable words of the Scriptures, should be execrated.† Undoubtedly what they perverted they received.

XI. The Millennium, Novatianism, the baptism of heretics, the keeping of Easter, engaged also the attention and divided the opinions of Christians, at and before that time (and, by the way, it may be observed, that such disputes, though on some accounts to be blamed, showed how much men were in earnest upon the subject); yet every one appealed for the grounds of his opinion to Scripture authority. Dionysius of Alexandria, who flourished A. D. 247, describing a conference or public disputation with the Millennarians of Egypt, confesses of them, though their adversary, "that they embrace whatever could be made out by good arguments from the Holy Scriptures."‡ Novatus, A. D. 251, distinguished by some rigid sentiments concerning the reception of those who had lapsed, and the founder of a numerous sect, in his few remaining works quotes the Gospel with the same respect as other Christians did; and concerning his followers, the testimony of Socrates, who wrote about the year 440, is positive, *viz.* "That in the disputes between the Catholics and them, each side endeavoured to support itself by the authority of the divine Scriptures."§

XII. The Donatists, who sprung up in the year 328, used the same Scriptures as we do. "Produce (saith Augustine) some proof from the Scriptures, whose authority is common to us both."‖

XIII. It is perfectly notorious that, in the Arian controversy, which arose soon after the year 300, both sides appealed to the same Scriptures, and with equal professions of deference and regard. The Arians, in their council of Antioch, A. D. 341, pronounce, that, "if any one, contrary to the sound doctrine of the Scriptures, say, that the Son is a creature, as one of the creatures, let him be an anathema."* They and the Athanasians mutually accuse each other of using *unscriptural* phrases; which was a mutual acknowledgment of the conclusive authority of Scripture.

XIV. The Priscillianists, A. D. 378,† the Pelagians, A. D. 405,‡ received the same Scriptures as we do.

XV. The testimony of Chrysostom, who lived near the year 400, is so positive in affirmation of the proposition which we maintain, that it may form a proper conclusion of the argument. "The general reception of the Gospels is a proof that their history is true and consistent; for, since the writings of the Gospels, many heresies have arisen, holding opinions contrary to what is contained in them, who yet received the Gospels either entire or in part."§ I am not moved by what may seem a deduction from Chrysostom's testimony, the words, "entire or in part;" for, if all the parts, which were ever questioned in our Gospels, were given up, it would not affect the miraculous origin of the religion in the smallest degree: *e. g.*

Cerinthus is said by Epiphanius to have received the Gospel of Matthew, but not entire. What the omissions were, does not appear. The common opinion, that he rejected the first two chapters, seems to have been a mistake.‖ It is agreed, however, by all who have given any account of Cerinthus, that he taught that the Holy Ghost (whether he meant by that name a person or a power) descended upon Jesus at his baptism; that Jesus from this time performed many miracles, and that he appeared after his death. He must have retained therefore the essential parts of the history.

Of all the ancient heretics, the most extraordinary was Marcion.¶ One of his tenets was the rejection of the Old Testament, as proceeding from an inferior and imperfect deity: and in pursuance of this hypothesis he erased from the New, and that, as it should seem, without entering into any critical reasons, every passage which recognised the Jewish Scriptures. He spared not a text which contradicted his opinion. It is reasonable to believe that Marcion treated books as he treated texts; yet this rash and wild controversialist published a recension, or chastised edition, of Saint Luke's Gospel, containing the leading facts, and all which is necessary to authenticate the religion. This example affords proof, that there were always some points, and those the main points, which neither wildness nor rashness, neither the fury of opposition nor the intemperance of controversy, would venture to call in question. There is no reason to believe that Marcion, though full of resentment against the Catholic Christians, ever charged them with forging their books. "The Gospel of Saint Matthew, the Epistle to the Hebrews, with those of Saint Peter and Saint James, as well as the Old Testament in general (he said,)

* Lardner, vol. xi. p. 158.
† Ib. vol. xi. p. 839.
‡ Ib. vol. iv. p. 666.
§ Ib. vol. v. p. 105.
‖ Ib. vol. vii. p. 243.

* Lardner, Cred. vol. vii. p. 277.
† Ib. vol. ix. p. 325.
‡ Ib. vol. xi. p. 52.
§ Ib. vol. x. p. 316.
‖ Ib. vol. ix. ed. 1788, p. 322.
¶ Ib. sect. ii. c. x. Also Michael. vol. i. c. i. sect. xviii.

were writings not for Christians but for Jews."* This declaration shows the ground upon which Marcion proceeded in his mutilation of the Scriptures, *viz.* his dislike of the passages or the books. Marcion flourished about the year 130.

Dr. Lardner, in his general Review, sums up this head of evidence in the following words: "Noëtus, Paul of Samosata, Sabellius, Marcellus, Photinus, the Novatians, Donatists, Manicheans,† Priscillianists, beside Artemon, the Audians, the Arians, and divers others, all received most or all the same books of the New Testament which the Catholics received; and agreed in a like respect for them as written by apostles, or their disciples and companions."‡

SECTION VIII.

The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of Saint Paul, the First Epistle of John, and the First of Peter, were received without doubt by those who doubted concerning the other books which are included in our present canon.

I STATE this proposition, because, if made out, it shows that the authenticity of their books was a subject amongst the early Christians of consideration and inquiry; and that, where there was cause of doubt, they did doubt; a circumstance which strengthens very much their testimony to such books as were received by them with full acquiescence.

I. Jerome, in his account of Caius, who was probably a presbyter of Rome, and who flourished near the year 200, records of him, that, reckoning up only thirteen epistles of Paul, he says the fourteenth, which is inscribed to the Hebrews, is not his: and then Jerome adds, "With the Romans to this day it is not looked upon as Paul's." This agrees in the main with the account given by Eusebius of the same ancient author and his work; except that Eusebius delivers his own remark in more guarded terms: "And indeed to this very time by *some* of the Romans, this epistle is not thought to be the apostle's."§

II. Origen, about twenty years after Caius, quoting the Epistle to the Hebrews, observes that some might dispute the authority of that epistle; and therefore proceeds to quote to the same point, as *undoubted* books of Scripture, the Gospel of Saint Matthew, the Acts of the Apostles, and Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians.‖ And in another place, this author speaks of the Epistle to the Hebrews thus:—"The account come down to us is various; some saying that Clement, who was bishop of Rome, wrote this epistle; others, that it was Luke, the same who wrote the Gospel and the Acts." Speaking also, in the same paragraph, of Peter, "Peter (says he) has left one epistle, acknowledged; let it be granted likewise that he wrote a second, for it is doubted of." And of John, "He has also left one epistle, of a very few lines; grant also a second and a third, for all do not allow them to be genuine." Now let it be noted, that Origen, who thus discriminates, and thus confesses his own doubts, and the doubts which subsisted in his time, expressly witnesses concerning the four Gospels, "that they alone are received without dispute by the whole church of God under heaven."*

III. Dionysius of Alexandria, in the year 247, doubts concerning the book of Revelation, whether it was written by Saint John; states the grounds of his doubt, represents the diversity of opinion concerning it, in his own time, and before his time.† Yet the same Dionysius uses and collates the four Gospels in a manner which shows that he entertained not the smallest suspicion of *their* authority, and in a manner also which shows that they, and they alone, were received as authentic histories of Christ.‡

IV. But this section may be said to have been framed on purpose to introduce to the reader two remarkable passages extant in Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History. The first passage opens with these words:—"Let us observe the writings of the apostle John which are *uncontradicted;* and first of all must be mentioned, as acknowledged of all, the Gospel according to him, well known to all the churches under heaven." The author then proceeds to relate the occasions of writing the Gospels, and the reasons for placing Saint John's the last, manifestly speaking of all the four as parallel in their authority, and in the certainty of their original.§ The second passage is taken from a chapter, the title of which is, "Of the Scriptures *universally acknowledged*, and of those that are not such." Eusebius begins his enumeration in the following manner:—"*In the first place*, are to be ranked the sacred four Gospels; then the book of the Acts of the Apostles; after that are to be reckoned the Epistles of Paul. In the next place, that called the First Epistle of John, and the Epistle of Peter, are to be esteemed authentic. After this is to be placed, if it be thought fit, the Revelation of John, about which we shall observe the different opinions at proper seasons. Of the controverted, but yet well known or approved by the most, are, that called the Epistle of James, and that of Jude, and the Second of Peter, and the Second and Third of John, whether they are written by the evangelist, or another of the same name."‖ He then proceeds to reckon up five others, not in our canon, which he calls in one place *spurious*, in another *controverted*, meaning, as appears to me, nearly the same thing by these two words.¶

It is manifest from this passage, that the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles (the parts of Scripture with which our concern principally lies), were acknowledged without dispute, even by those who raised objections, or entertained doubts, about some other parts of the same collection. But the passage proves something more than this. The author was extremely conversant

* I have transcribed this sentence from Michaelis (p. 38,) who has not, however, referred to the authority upon which he attributes these words to Marcion.

† This must be with an exception, however, of Faustus, who lived so late as the year 384.

‡ Lardner, vol. xii. p. 12.—Dr. Lardner's future inquiries supplied him with many other instances.

§ Ib. vol. iii. p. 240. ‖ Ib. p. 246.

* Lardner, vol. iii. p. 234. † Ib. vol. iv. p. 670.

‡ Ib. 661. § Ib. vol. viii. p. 90. ‖ Ib. p. 39.

¶ That Eusebius could not intend, by the word rendered "spurious," what we at present mean by it, is evident from a clause in this very chapter, where, speaking of the Gospels of Peter, and Thomas, and Matthias, and some others, he says, "They are not so much as to be reckoned among the *spurious*, but are to be rejected as altogether absurd and impious."—Vol. viii. p. 98.

in the writings of Christians, which had been published from the commencement of the institution to his own time: and it was from these writings that he drew his knowledge of the character and reception of the books in question. That Eusebius recurred to this medium of information, and that he had examined with attention this species of proof, is shown, first, by a passage in the very chapter we are quoting, in which, speaking of the books which he calls spurious, "None (says he) of the ecclesiastical writers, in the succession of the apostles, have vouchsafed to make any mention of them in their writings;" and, secondly, by another passage of the same work, wherein speaking of the First Epistle of Peter, "This (says he) the presbyters of ancient times have quoted in their writings as undoubtedly genuine;"* and then, speaking of some other writings bearing the name of Peter, "We know (he says) that they have not been delivered down to us in the number of Catholic writings, forasmuch as no ecclesiastical writer of the ancients, or of our times, has made use of testimonies out of them." "But in the progress of this history," the author proceeds, "we shall make it our business to show, together with the successions from the apostles, what ecclesiastical writers, in every age, have used such writings as these which are contradicted, and what they have said with regard to the Scriptures received in the New Testament, *and acknowledged by all*, and with regard to those which are not such."†

After this it is reasonable to believe, that when Eusebius states the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, as uncontradicted, uncontested, and acknowledged by all; and when he places them in opposition, not only to those which were spurious, in our sense of that term, but to those which were controverted, and even to those which were well known and approved by many, yet doubted of by some; he represents not only the sense of his own age, but the result of the evidence which the writings of prior ages, from the apostles' time to his own, had furnished to his inquiries. The opinion of Eusebius and his contemporaries appears to have been founded upon the testimony of writers whom they *then* called ancient: and we may observe, that such of the works of these writers as have come down to our times, entirely confirm the judgment, and support the distinction which Eusebius proposes. The books which he calls "books universally acknowledged," are in fact used and quoted in the remaining works of Christian writers, during the two hundred and fifty years between the apostles' time and that of Eusebius, much more frequently than, and in a different manner from, those, the authority of which, he tells us, was disputed.

SECTION IX.

Our historical Scriptures were attacked by the early adversaries of Christianity, as containing the accounts upon which the religion was founded.

NEAR the middle of the second century, Celsus, a heathen philosopher, wrote a professed treatise against Christianity. To this treatise, Origen, who came about fifty years after him, published an answer, in which he frequently recites his adversary's words and arguments. The work of Celsus is lost; but that of Origen remains. Origen appears to have given us the words of Celsus, where he professes to give them very faithfully; and, amongst other reasons for thinking so, this is one, that the objection, as stated by him from Celsus, is sometimes stronger than his own answer. I think it also probable, that Origen, in his answer, has retailed a large portion of the work of Celsus: "That it may not be suspected (he says) that we pass by any chapters, because we have no answers at hand, I have thought it best, according to my ability, to confute every thing proposed by him, not so much observing the natural order of things, as the order which he has taken himself."*

Celsus wrote about one hundred years after the Gospels were published; and therefore any notices of these books from him are extremely important for their antiquity. They are, however, rendered more so by the character of the author; for, the reception, credit, and notoriety, of these books must have been well established amongst Christians, to have made them subjects of animadversion and opposition by strangers and by enemies. It evinces the truth of what Chrysostom, two centuries afterward, observed, that "the Gospels, when written, were not hidden in a corner, or buried in obscurity, but they were made known to all the world, before enemies as well as others, even as they are now."†

1. Celsus, or the Jew whom he personates, uses these words:—"I could say many things concerning the affairs of Jesus, and those, too, different from those written by the disciples of Jesus; but I purposely omit them."‡ Upon this passage, it has been rightly observed, that it is not easy to believe, that if Celsus could have contradicted the disciples upon good evidence in any material point, he would have omitted to do so, and that the assertion is, what Origen calls it, a mere oratorical flourish.

It is sufficient, however, to prove, that, in the time of Celsus, there were books well known, and allowed to be written by the disciples of Jesus, which books contained a history of him. By the term *disciples*, Celsus does not mean the followers of Jesus in general; for them he calls Christians, or believers, or the like; but those who had been taught by Jesus himself, *i. e.* his apostles and companions.

2. In another passage, Celsus accuses the Christians of altering the Gospel.§ The accusation refers to some variations in the readings of particular passages; for Celsus goes on to object, that when they are pressed hard, and one reading has been confuted, they disown that, and fly to another. We cannot perceive from Origen, that Celsus specified any particular instances, and without such specification the charge is of no value. But the true conclusion to be drawn from it is, that there were in the hands of the Christians, histories, which were even then of some standing: for various readings and corruptions do not take place in recent productions.

* Lardner, vol. viii. p. 99. † Ib. p. 111.

* Orig. cont. Cels. l. i. sect. xli.
† In Matt. Hom. 1. 7.
‡ Lardner, Jewish and Heathen Test. vol. ii. p. 274.
§ Ib. p. 275.

The former quotation, the reader will remember, proves that these books were composed by the disciples of Jesus strictly so called; the present quotation shows, that, though objections were taken by the adversaries of the religion to the integrity of these books, none were made to their genuineness.

3. In a third passage, the Jew, whom Celsus introduces, shuts up an argument in this manner:—"These things then we have alleged to you out of *your own writings*, not needing any other weapons."* It is manifest that this boast proceeds upon the supposition that the books, over which the writer affects to triumph, possessed an authority by which Christians confessed themselves to be bound.

4. That the books to which Celsus refers were no other than our present Gospels, is made out by his allusions to various passages still found in these Gospels. Celsus takes notice of the *genealogies*, which fixes two of these Gospels; of the precepts, Resist not him that injures you, and, If a man strike thee on the one cheek, offer to him the other also;† of the woes denounced by Christ; of his predictions; of his saying, that it is impossible to serve two masters;‡ of the purple robe, the crown of thorns, and the reed in his hand; of the blood that flowed from the body of Jesus upon the cross,§ which circumstance is recorded by John alone; and (what is *instar omnium* for the purpose for which we produce it) of the difference in the accounts given of the resurrection by the evangelists, some mentioning two angels at the sepulchre, others only one.‖

It is extremely material to remark, that Celsus not only perpetually referred to the accounts of Christ contained in the four Gospels,¶ but that he referred to no other accounts; that he founded none of his objections to Christianity upon any thing delivered in spurious Gospels.

II. What Celsus was in the second century, Porphyry became in the third. His work, which was a large and formal treatise against the Christian religion, is not extant. We must be content therefore to gather his objections from Christian writers, who have noticed in order to answer them; and enough remains of this species of information, to prove completely, that Porphyry's animadversions were directed against the contents of our present Gospels, and of the Acts of the Apostles; Porphyry considering that to overthrow *them* was to overthrow the religion. Thus he objects to the repetition of a generation in Saint Matthew's genealogy; to Matthew's call; to the quotation of a text from Isaiah, which is found in a psalm ascribed to Asaph; to the calling of the lake of Tiberias a sea; to the expression in Saint Matthew, "the abomination of desolation;" to the variation in Matthew and Mark upon the text, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," Matthew citing it from Isaias, Mark from the Prophets; to John's application of the term "Word;" to Christ's change of intention about going up to the feast of tabernacles, (John vii. 8;) to the judgment denounced by Saint Peter upon Ananias and Sapphira, which he calls an imprecation of death.**

The instances here alleged, serve, in some measure, to show the nature of Porphyry's objections, and prove that Porphyry had read the Gospels with that sort of attention which a writer would employ who regarded them as the depositaries of the religion which he attacked. Beside these specifications, there exists, in the writings of ancient Christians, general evidence, that the places of Scripture upon which Porphyry had remarked were very numerous.

In some of the above-cited examples, Porphyry, speaking of Saint Matthew, calls him *your evangelist;* he also uses the term evangelists in the plural number. What was said of Celsus, is true likewise of Porphyry, that it does not appear that he considered any history of Christ, except these, as having authority with Christians.

III. A third great writer against the Christian religion was the emperor Julian, whose work was composed about a century after that of Porphyry.

In various long extracts, transcribed from this work by Cyril and Jerome, it appears,* that Julian noticed *by name* Matthew and Luke, in the difference between their genealogies of Christ; that he objected to Matthew's application of the prophecy, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," (ii. 15,) and to that of "A virgin shall conceive;" (i. 23;) that he recited sayings of Christ, and various passages of his history, in the very words of the evangelists; in particular, that Jesus healed lame and blind people, and exorcised demoniacs in the villages of Bethsaida and Bethany; that he alleged, that none of Christ's disciples ascribed to him the creation of the world, except John; that neither Paul, nor Matthew, nor Luke, nor Mark, have dared to call Jesus, God; that John wrote later than the other evangelists, and at a time when a great number of men in the cities of Greece and Italy were converted; that he alludes to the conversion of Cornelius and of Sergius Paulus, to Peter's vision, to the circular letter sent by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, which are all recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: by which quoting of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, and by quoting no other, Julian shows that these were the historical books, and the only historical books received by Christians as of authority, and as the authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ, of his apostles, and of the doctrines taught by them. But Julian's testimony does something more than represent the judgment of the Christian church in his time. It discovers also his own. He himself expressly states the early date of these records; he calls them by the names which they now bear. He all along supposes, he no where attempts to question, their genuineness.

The argument in favour of the books of the New Testament, drawn from the notice taken of their contents by the early writers against the religion, is very considerable. It proves that the accounts, which Christians had then, were the accounts which we have now; that our present Scriptures were theirs. It proves, moreover, that neither Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth century, suspected the authenticity of these books, or even insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribed them. Not one of them expressed an opinion upon this subject different from that which was holden by Christians. And when

* Lardner, Jewish and Heathen Test. vol. ii. p. 276.
† Ibid. ‡ Ib. p. 277.
§ Ib. p. 280, 281. ‖ Ib. p. 283.
¶ The particulars, of which the above are only a few, are well collected by Mr. Bryant, p. 140.
** Jewish and Heathen Test. vol. iii. p. 166. &c.

* Jewish and Heathen Test. vol. iv. p. 77, &c.

we consider how much it would have availed them to have cast a doubt upon this point, if they could; and how ready they showed themselves to be, to take every advantage in their power; and that they were all men of learning and inquiry; their concession, or rather their suffrage, upon the subject, is extremely valuable.

In the case of Porphyry, it is made still stronger, by the consideration that he did in fact support himself by this species of objection, when he saw any room for it, or when his acuteness could supply any pretence for alleging it. The prophecy of Daniel he attacked upon this very ground of spuriousness, insisting that it was written after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and maintains his charge of forgery by some far-fetched indeed, but very subtle criticisms. Concerning the writings of the New Testament, no trace of this suspicion is any where to be found in him.*

SECTION X.

Formal catalogues of authentic Scriptures were published, in all which our present sacred histories were included.

This species of evidence comes later than the rest; as it was not natural that catalogues of any particular class of books should be put forth until Christian writings became numerous: or until some writings showed themselves, claiming titles which did not belong to them, and thereby rendering it necessary to separate books of authority from others. But, when it does appear, it is extremely satisfactory; the catalogues, though numerous, and made in countries at a wide distance from one another, differing very little, differing in nothing which is material, and all containing the four Gospels. To this last article there is no exception.

I. In the writings of Origen which remain, and in some extracts preserved by Eusebius, from works of his which are now lost, there are enumerations of the books of Scripture, in which the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are distinctly and honourably specified, and in which no books appear beside what are now received † The reader, by this time, will easily recollect that the date of Origen's works is A. D. 230.

II. Athanasius, about a century afterward, delivered a catalogue of the books of the New Testament in form, containing our Scriptures and no others; of which he says, "In these alone the doctrine of religion is taught; let no man add to them or take any thing from them."‡

III. About twenty years after Athanasius, Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, set forth a catalogue of the books of Scripture, publicly read at that time in the church of Jerusalem, exactly the same as ours, except that the "Revelation" is omitted.§

IV. And fifteen years after Cyril, the council of Laodicea delivered an authoritative catalogue of canonical Scripture, like Cyril's, the same as ours, with the omission of the "Revelation."

V. Catalogues now became frequent. Within thirty years after the last date, that is, from the year 363 to near the conclusion of the fourth century, we have catalogues by Epiphanius,* by Gregory Nazianzen,† by Philaster, bishop of Brescia in Italy,‡ by Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, all, as they are sometimes called, *clean* catalogues (that is, they admit no books into the number beside what we now receive), and all, for every purpose of historic evidence, the same as ours §

VI. Within the same period, Jerome, the most learned Christian writer of his age, delivered a catalogue of the books of the New Testament, recognising every book now received, with the intimation of a doubt concerning the Epistle to the Hebrews alone, and taking not the least notice of any book which is not now received.‖

VII. Contemporary with Jerome, who lived in Palestine, was Saint Augustine, in Africa, who published likewise a catalogue, without joining to the Scriptures, as books of authority, any other ecclesiastical writing whatever, and without omitting one which we at this day acknowledge.¶

VIII. And with these concurs another contemporary writer, Rufin, presbyter of Aquileia, whose catalogue, like theirs, is perfect and unmixed, and concludes with these remarkable words: "These are the volumes which the fathers have included in the canon, and out of which they would have us prove the doctrine of our faith."**

SECTION XI.

These propositions cannot be predicated of any of those books which are commonly called the Apocryphal Books of the New Testament.

I do not know that the objection taken from the apocryphal writings is at present much relied upon by scholars. But there are many, who, hearing that various Gospels existed in ancient times under the names of the apostles, may have taken up a notion, that the selection of our present Gospels from the rest, was rather an arbitrary or accidental choice, than founded in any clear and certain cause of preference. To these it may be very useful to know the truth of the case. I observe, therefore,

I. That, beside our Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, no Christian history, claiming to be written by an apostle or apostolical man, is quoted within three hundred years after the birth of Christ, by any writer now extant, or known; or, if quoted, is not quoted without marks of censure and rejection.

I have not advanced this assertion without inquiry; and I doubt not, but that the passages cited by Mr. Jones and Dr. Lardner, under the several titles which the apocryphal books bear; or a reference to the places where they are mentioned as collected in a very accurate table, published in the year 1773, by the Rev. J. Atkinson, will make out the truth of the proposition to the satis-

* Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament, vol. i. p. 43 Marsh's Translation.
† Lardner, Cred. vol. iii. p. 234, &c.; vol. viii. p. 196.
‡ Ib. vol. viii. p. 223. § Ib. p. 270.

* Lardner, Cred. vol. viii. p. 368.
† Ib. vol. ix. p. 132. ‡ Ib. p. 373.
§ Epiphanius omits the Acts of the Apostles. This must have been an accidental mistake, either in him or in some copyist of his work; for he elsewhere expressly refers to this book, and ascribes it to Luke.
‖ Lardner, Cred. vol. x. p. 77. ¶ Ib. p. 213.
** Ib. p. 187.

faction of every fair and competent judgment. If there be any book which may seem to form an exception to the observation, it is a Hebrew Gospel, which was circulated under the various titles of the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Gospel of the Nazarenes, of the Ebionites, sometimes called of the Twelve, by some ascribed to Saint Matthew. This Gospel is *once*, and only *once*, cited by Clemens Alexandrinus, who lived, the reader will remember, in the latter part of the second century, and which same Clement quotes one or other of our four Gospels in almost every page of his work. It is twice mentioned by Origen, A. D. 230; and both times with marks of diminution and discredit. And this is the ground upon which the exception stands. But what is still more material to observe is, that this Gospel, in the main, agreed with our present Gospel of Saint Matthew.*

Now if, with this account of the apocryphal Gospels, we compare what we have read concerning the canonical Scriptures in the preceding sections; or even recollect that general but well-founded assertion of Dr. Lardner, "That in the remaining works of Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, who all lived in the first two centuries, there are more and larger quotations of the small volume of the New Testament, than of all the works of Cicero, by writers of all characters, for several ages;"† and if to this we add, that, notwithstanding the loss of many works of the primitive times of Christianity, we have, within the above-mentioned period, the remains of Christian writers, who lived in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt, the part of Africa that used the Latin tongue, in Crete, Greece, Italy, and Gaul, in all which remains, references are found to our evangelists; I apprehend, that we shall perceive a clear and broad line of division, between those writings, and all others pretending to similar authority.

II. But beside certain *histories* which assumed the names of apostles, and which were forgeries properly so called, there were some other Christian writings, in the whole or in part of an historical nature, which, though not forgeries, are denominated apocryphal, as being of uncertain or of no authority.

Of this second class of writings, I have found only two which are noticed by any author of the first three centuries, without express terms of condemnation; and these are, the one, a book entitled the Preaching of Peter, quoted repeatedly by Clemens Alexandrinus, A. D. 196; the other, a book entitled the Revelation of Peter, upon which the above-mentioned Clemens Alexandrinus is said, by Eusebius, to have written notes; and which is twice cited in a work still extant, ascribed to the same author.

I conceive, therefore, that the proposition we have before advanced, even after it had been subjected to every exception, of every kind, that can be alleged, separates, by a wide interval, our historical Scriptures from all other writings which profess to give an account of the same subject.

We may be permitted however to add,

1. That there is no evidence that any spurious or apocryphal books whatever existed in the first century of the Christian era, in which century all our historical books are proved to have been extant. "There are no quotations of any such books in the apostolical fathers, by whom I mean Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, whose writings reach from about the year of our Lord 70, to the year 108 (and some of whom have quoted each and every one of our historical Scriptures); I say this," adds Dr. Lardner, "because I think it has been proved."*

2. These apocryphal writings were not read in the churches of Christians;

3. Were not admitted into their volume;

4. Do not appear in their catalogues;

5. Were not noticed by their adversaries;

6. Were not alleged by different parties as of authority in their controversies;

7. Were not the subjects, amongst them, of commentaries, versions, collations, expositions.

Finally; beside the silence of three centuries, or evidence, within that time, of their rejection, they were, with a consent nearly universal, reprobated by Christian writers of succeeding ages.

Although it be made out by these observations, that the books in question never obtained any degree of credit and notoriety which can place them in competition with our Scriptures; yet it appears, from the writings of the fourth century, that many such existed in that century, and in the century preceding it. It may be difficult at this distance of time to account for their origin. Perhaps the most probable explication is, that they were in general composed with a design of making a profit by the sale. Whatever treated of the subject, would find purchasers. It was an advantage taken of the pious curiosity of unlearned Christians. With a view to the same purpose, they were many of them adapted to the particular opinions of particular sects, which would naturally promote their circulation amongst the favourers of those opinions. After all, they were probably much more obscure than we imagine. Except the Gospel according to the Hebrews, there is none of which we hear more than the Gospel of the Egyptians; yet there is good reason to believe that Clement, a presbyter of Alexandria in Egypt, A. D. 184, and a man of almost universal reading, had never seen it.† A Gospel according to Peter, was another of the most ancient books of this kind; yet Serapion, bishop of Antioch, A. D. 200, had not read it, when he heard of such a book being in the hands of the Christians of Rhossus in Cilicia; and speaks of obtaining a sight of this Gospel from some sectaries who used it.‡ Even of the Gospel of the Hebrews, which confessedly stands at the head of the catalogue, Jerome, at the end of the fourth century, was glad to procure a copy by the favour of the Nazarenes of Berea. Nothing of this sort ever happened, or could have happened concerning our Gospels.

One thing is observable of all the apocryphal Christian writings, *viz.* that they proceed upon the same fundamental history of Christ and his apostles, as that which is disclosed in our Scriptures. The mission of Christ, his power of working miracles, his communication of that power to the apostles, his passion, death, and resurrection,

* In applying to this Gospel, what Jerome in the latter end of the fourth century has mentioned of a Hebrew Gospel, I think it probable that we sometimes confound it with a Hebrew copy of Saint Matthew's Gospel, whether an original or version, which was then extant.

† Lardner, Cred. vol. xii. p. 53.

* Lardner, Cred. vol. xii. p. 158.

† Jones, vol. i. p. 243. ‡ Lardner, Cred. vol. ii. p. 537.

are assumed or asserted by every one of them. The names under which some of them came forth, are the names of men of eminence in our histories. What these books give, are not contradictions, but unauthorized additions. The principal facts are supposed, the principal agents the same; which shows, that these points were too much fixed to be altered or disputed.

If there be any book of this description, which appears to have imposed upon some considerable number of learned Christians, it is the Sibylline oracles; but, when we reflect upon the circumstances which facilitated that imposture, we shall cease to wonder either at the attempt or its success. It was at that time universally understood, that such a prophetic writing existed. Its contents were kept secret. This situation afforded to some one a hint, as well as an opportunity, to give out a writing under this name, favourable to the already established persuasion of Christians, and which writing, by the aid and recommendation of these circumstances, would in some degree, it is probable, be received. Of the ancient forgery we know but little: what is now produced, could not, in my opinion, have imposed upon any one. It is nothing else than the Gospel history, woven into verse; perhaps was at first rather a fiction than a forgery; an exercise of ingenuity, more than an attempt to deceive.

CHAPTER X.

Recapitulation.

THE reader will now be pleased to recollect, that the two points which form the subject of our present discussion, are first, that the Founder of Christianity, his associates, and immediate followers, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings; secondly, that they did so, in attestation of the miraculous history recorded in our Scriptures, and solely in consequence of their belief of the truth of that history.

The argument, by which these two propositions have been maintained by us, stands thus:

No historical fact, I apprehend, is more certain, than that the original propagators of Christianity voluntarily subjected themselves to lives of fatigue, danger, and suffering, in the prosecution of their undertaking. The nature of the undertaking; the character of the persons employed in it; the opposition of their tenets to the fixed opinions and expectations of the country in which they first advanced them; their undissembled condemnation of the religion of all other countries; their total want of power, authority, or force; render it in the highest degree probable that this must have been the case. The probability is increased, by what we know of the fate of the Founder of the institution, who was put to death for his attempt; and by what we also know of the cruel treatment of the converts to the institution, within thirty years after its commencement; both which points are attested by heathen writers, and, being once admitted, leave it very incredible that the primitive emissaries of the religion, who exercised their ministry, first, amongst the people who had destroyed their Master, and, afterward, amongst those who persecuted their converts, should themselves escape with impunity, or pursue their purpose in ease and safety. This probability, thus sustained by foreign testimony, is advanced, I think, to historical certainty, by the evidence of our own books; by the accounts of a writer who was the companion of the persons whose sufferings he relates: by the letters of the persons themselves; by predictions of persecutions ascribed to the Founder of the religion, which predictions would not have been inserted in this history, much less have been studiously dwelt upon, if they had not accorded with the event, and which, even if falsely ascribed to him, could only have been so ascribed, because the event suggested them; lastly, by incessant exhortations to fortitude and patience, and by an earnestness, repetition, and urgency, upon the subject, which were unlikely to have appeared, if there had not been, at the time, some extraordinary call for the exercise of these virtues.

It is made out also, I think, with sufficient evidence, that both the teachers and converts of the religion, in consequence of their new profession, took up a new course of life and behaviour.

The next great question is, what they did this FOR. That it was *for* a miraculous story of some kind or other, is to my apprehension extremely manifest; because, as to the fundamental article, the designation of the person, *viz.* that this particular person, Jesus of Nazareth, ought to be received as the Messiah, or as a messenger from God, they neither had, nor could have, any thing but miracles to stand upon. That the exertions and sufferings of the apostles were *for* the story which we have now, is proved by the consideration that this story is transmitted to us by two of their own number, and by two others personally connected with them; that the particularity of the narrative proves, that the writers claimed to possess circumstantial information, that from their situation they had full opportunity of acquiring such information, that they certainly, at least, knew what their colleagues, their companions, their masters, taught; that each of these books contains enough to prove the truth of the religion; that, if any one of them therefore be genuine, it is sufficient; that the genuineness, however, of all of them is made out, as well by the general arguments which evince the genuineness of the most undisputed remains of antiquity, as also by peculiar and specific proofs, *viz.* by citations from them in writings belonging to a period immediately contiguous to that in which they were published; by the distinguished regard paid by early Christians to the authority of these books, (which regard was manifested by their collecting of them into a volume, appropriating to that volume titles of peculiar respect, translating them into various languages, digesting them into harmonies, writing commentaries upon them, and, still more conspicuously, by the reading of them in their public assemblies in all parts of the world;) by a universal agreement with respect to *these* books, whilst doubts were entertained concerning some others; by contending sects appealing to them; by the early adversaries of the religion not disputing their genuineness, but, on the contrary, treating them as the depositaries of the history upon which the religion was founded; by many formal catalogues of these, as of certain and authoritative writings, published in different and distant parts of the Christian world; lastly, by the absence or

defect of the above-cited topics of evidence, when applied to any other histories of the same subject.

These are strong arguments to prove, that the books actually proceeded from the authors whose names they bear, (and have always borne, for there is not a particle of evidence to show that they ever went under any other;) but the strict genuineness of the books is perhaps more than is necessary to the support of our proposition. For even supposing that, by reason of the silence of antiquity, or the loss of records, we know not who were the writers of the four Gospels, yet the fact, that they were received as authentic accounts of the transaction upon which the religion rested, and were received as such by Christians, at or near the age of the apostles, by those whom the apostles had taught, and by societies which apostles had founded; this fact, I say, connected with the consideration, that they are corroborative of each other's testimony, and that they are farther corroborated by another contemporary history, taking up the story where they had left it, and, in a narrative built upon that story, accounting for the rise and production of changes in the world, the effects of which subsist at this day; connected, moreover, with the confirmation which they receive from letters written by the apostles themselves, which both assume the same general story, and, as often as occasions lead them to do so, allude to particular parts of it; and connected also with the reflection, that if the apostles delivered any different story, it is lost, (the present and no other being referred to by a series of Christian writers, down from their age to our own; being likewise recognised in a variety of institutions, which prevailed early and universally amongst the disciples of the religion;) and that so great a change, as the oblivion of one story and the substitution of another, under such circumstances, could not have taken place; this evidence would be deemed, I apprehend, sufficient to prove concerning these books, that, whoever were the authors of them, they exhibit the story which the apostles told, and for which, consequently, they acted, and they suffered.

If it be so, the religion must be true. These men could not be deceivers.—By only not bearing testimony, they might have avoided all these sufferings, and have lived quietly. Would men in such circumstances pretend to have seen what they never saw; assert facts which they had no knowledge of; go about lying to teach virtue; and, though not only convinced of Christ's being an impostor, but having seen the success of his imposture in his crucifixion, yet persist in carrying it on; and so persist, as to bring upon themselves, for nothing, and with a full knowledge of the consequence, enmity and hatred, danger and death?

OF THE DIRECT HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

PROPOSITION II.

CHAPTER I.

Our first proposition was, "*That there is satisfactory evidence that many, pretending to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undertaken and undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of the truth of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.*"

Our second proposition, and which now remains to be treated of, is, "*That there is* not *satisfactory evidence, that persons pretending to be original witnesses of any other similar miracles, have acted in the same manner, in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of the truth of those accounts.*"

I ENTER upon this part of my argument, by declaring how far my belief in miraculous accounts goes. If the reformers in the time of Wickliffe, or of Luther; or those of England, in the time of Henry the Eighth, or of queen Mary; or the founders of our religious sects since, such as were Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Wesley in our own times; had undergone the life of toil and exertion, of danger and sufferings, which we know that many of them did undergo, *for* a miraculous story; that is to say, if they had founded their public ministry upon the allegation of miracles wrought within their own knowledge, and upon narratives which could not be resolved into delusion or mistake; and if it had appeared, that their conduct really had its origin in these accounts, I should have believed them. Or, to borrow an instance which will be familiar to every one of my readers, if the late Mr. Howard had undertaken his labours and journeys in attestation, and in consequence of a clear and sensible miracle, I should have believed him also. Or, to represent the same thing under a third supposition; if Socrates had professed to perform public miracles at Athens; if the friends of Socrates, Phædo, Cebes, Crito, and Simmias, together with Plato, and many of his followers, relying upon the attestations which these miracles afforded to his pretensions, had, at the hazard of their lives, and the certain expense of their ease and tranquillity, gone about Greece, after his death, to publish and propagate his doctrines: and if these things had come to our knowledge, in the same way as that in which the life of Socrates is now transmitted to us, through the hands of his companions and disciples, that is, by writings received without doubt as theirs, from the age in which they were published to the present, I should have believed this likewise. And my belief would, in each case, be much strengthened, if the subject of the mission were of importance to the conduct and happiness of human life: if it testified any thing which it behoved mankind to know from such authority; if the nature of what it delivered, required the sort of proof which it alleged; if the occasion was adequate to the interposition, the end worthy of the means. In the last case, my faith would be much confirmed, if the effects of the transaction *remained;* more especially, if a change had been wrought, at the time, in the opinion and conduct of such numbers, as to lay the foundation of an institution, and of a system of doctrines, which had since overspread the greatest part of the civilized world. I should have believed, I say, the testimony in these cases; yet none of them do more than come up to the apostolic history.

If any one choose to call assent to its evidence credulity, it is at least incumbent upon him to produce examples in which the same evidence hath turned out to be fallacious. And this contains the precise question which we are now to agitate.

In stating the comparison between our evidence, and what our adversaries may bring into competition with ours, we will divide the distinctions which we wish to propose into two kinds,—those which relate to the proof, and those which relate to the miracles. Under the former head we may lay out the case.

I. Such accounts of supernatural events as are found only in histories by some ages posterior to the transaction, and of which it is evident that the historian could know little more than his reader. Ours is contemporary history. This difference alone removes out of our way, the miraculous history of Pythagoras, who lived five hundred years before the Christian era, written by Porphyry and Jamblicus, who lived three hundred years after that era; the prodigies of Livy's history; the fables of the heroic ages; the whole of the Greek and Roman, as well as of the Gothic mythology; a great part of the legendary history of Popish saints, the very best attested of which is extracted from the certificates that are exhibited during the process of their canonization, a ceremony which seldom takes place till a century after their deaths. It applies also with considerable force to the miracles of Apollonius Tyaneus, which are contained in a solitary history of his life, published by Philostratus, above a hundred years after his death; and in which, whether Philostratus had any prior account to guide him, depends upon his single unsupported assertion. Also to some of the miracles of the third century, especially to one extraordinary instance, the account of Gregory, bishop of Neocesarea, called Thaumaturgus, delivered in the writings of Gregory of Nyssen, who lived one hundred and thirty years after the subject of his panegyric.

The value of this circumstance is shown to have been accurately exemplified in the history of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the order of Jesuits.* His life, written by a companion of his, and by one of the order, was published about fifteen years after his death. In which life, the author, so far from ascribing any miracles to Ignatius, industriously states the reasons why he was not invested with any such power. The life was republished fifteen years afterward, with the addition of many circumstances which were the fruit, the author says, of farther inquiry, and of diligent examination; but still with a total silence about miracles. When Ignatius had been dead nearly sixty years, the Jesuits, conceiving a wish to have the founder of their order placed in the Roman calendar, began, as it should seem, for the first time, to attribute to him a catalogue of miracles, which could not then be distinctly disproved; and which there was, in those who governed the church, a strong disposition to admit upon the slenderest proofs.

II. We may lay out of the case, accounts published in one country, of what passed in a distant country, without any proof that such accounts were known or received at home. In the case of Christianity, Judea, which was the scene of the transaction, was the centre of the mission. The story was published in the place in which it was acted. The church of Christ was first planted at Jerusalem itself. With that church, others corresponded. From thence the primitive teachers of the institution went forth; thither they assembled. The church of Jerusalem, and the several churches of Judea, subsisted from the beginning, and for many ages;* received also the same books and the same accounts, as other churches did.

This distinction disposes, amongst others, of the above-mentioned miracles of Apollonius Tyaneus, most of which are related to have been performed in India; no evidence remaining that either the miracles ascribed to him, or the history of those miracles, were ever heard of in India. Those of Francis Xavier, the Indian missionary, with many others of the Romish breviary, are liable to the same objection, *viz.* that the accounts of them were published at a vast distance from the supposed scene of the wonders.†

III. We lay out of the case *transient* rumours. Upon the first publication of an extraordinary account, or even of an article of ordinary intelligence, no one, who is not personally acquainted with the transaction, can know whether it be true or false, because any man may publish any story. It is in the future confirmation, or contradiction, of the account; in its permanency, or its disappearance; its dying away into silence, or its increasing in notoriety; its being followed up by subsequent accounts, and being repeated in different and independent accounts; that solid truth is distinguished from fugitive lies. This distinction is altogether on the side of Christianity. The story did not drop. On the contrary, it was succeeded by a train of action and events dependent upon it. The accounts, which we have in our hands, were composed after the first reports must have subsided. They were followed by a train of writings upon the subject. The historical testimonies of the transaction were many and various, and connected with letters, discourses, controversies, apologies, successively produced by the same transaction.

IV. We may lay out of the case what I call *naked* history. It has been said, that if the prodigies of the Jewish history had been found only in fragments of Manetho, or Berosus, we should have paid no regard to them: and I am willing to admit this. If we knew nothing of the fact, but from the fragment; if we possessed no proof that these accounts had been credited and acted upon, from times, probably, as ancient as the accounts themselves; if we had no visible effects connected with the history, no subsequent or collateral testimony to confirm it; under these circumstances, I think that it would be undeserving of credit. But this certainly is not our case. In appreciating the evidence of Christianity, the books are to be combined with the institution; with the prevalency of the religion at this day; with the time and place of its origin; which are acknowledged points; with the circumstances of its rise and progress, as collected from external history; with the fact of our present books being received by the votaries of the institution from the beginning; with that of other books coming after these, filled

* Douglas's Criterion of Miracles, p. 74.

* The succession of many eminent bishops of Jerusalem in the first three centuries, is distinctly preserved; as Alexander, A. D. 212, who succeeded Narcissus, then 116 years old.

† Douglas's Crit. p. 84.

with accounts of effects and consequences resulting from the transaction, or referring to the transaction, or built upon it; lastly, with the consideration of the number and variety of the books themselves, the different writers from which they proceed, the different views with which they were written, so disagreeing as to repel the suspicion of confederacy, so agreeing as to show that they were founded in a common original, *i. e.* in a story substantially the same. Whether this proof be satisfactory or not, it is properly a cumulation of evidence, by no means a naked or solitary record.

V. A mark of historical truth, although only in a certain way, and to a certain degree, is *particularity*, in names, dates, places, circumstances, and in the order of events preceding or following the transaction: of which kind, for instance, is the particularity in the description of Saint Paul's voyage and shipwreck, in the 27th chapter of the Acts, which no man, I think, can read without being convinced that the writer was there; and also in the account of the cure and examination of the blind man, in the ninth chapter of Saint John's Gospel, which bears every mark of personal knowledge on the part of the historian.* I do not deny that fiction has often the particularity of truth; but then it is of studied and elaborate fiction, or of a formal attempt to deceive, that we observe this. Since, however, experience proves that particularity is not confined to truth, I have stated that it is a proof of truth only to a certain extent, *i. e.* it reduces the question to this, whether we can depend or not upon the *probity* of the relater? which is a considerable advance in our present argument; for an express attempt to deceive, in which case alone particularity can appear without truth, is charged upon the evangelists by few. If the historian acknowledge himself to have received his intelligence from others, the particularity of the narrative shows, *prima facie*, the accuracy of his inquiries, and the fulness of his information. This remark belongs to Saint Luke's history. Of the particularity which we allege, many examples may be found in all the Gospels. And it is very difficult to conceive, that such numerous particularities, as are almost every where to be met with in the Scriptures, should be raised out of nothing, or be spun out of the imagination without any fact to go upon.†

It is to be remarked, however, that this particularity is only to be looked for in direct history. It is not natural in references or allusions, which yet, in other respects, often afford, as far as they go, the most unsuspicious evidence.

VI. We lay out of the case such stories of supernatural events, as require, on the part of the hearer, nothing more than an *otiose* assent; stories upon which nothing depends, in which no interest is involved, nothing is to be done or changed in consequence of believing them. Such stories are credited, if the careless assent that is given to them deserve that name, more by the indolence of the hearer, than by his judgment: or, though not much credited, are passed from one to another without inquiry or resistance. To this case, and to this case alone, belongs what is called the love of the marvellous. I have never known it carry men farther. Men do not suffer persecution from the love of the marvellous. Of the indifferent nature we are speaking of, are most vulgar errors and popular superstitions: most, for instance, of the current reports of apparitions. Nothing depends upon their being true or false. But not, surely, of this kind were the alleged miracles of Christ and his apostles. They decided, if true, the most important question upon which the human mind can fix its anxiety. They claimed to regulate the opinions of mankind, upon subjects in which they are not only deeply concerned, but usually refractory and obstinate. Men could not be utterly careless in such a case as this. If a Jew took up the story, he found his darling partiality to his own nation and law wounded; if a Gentile, he found his idolatry and polytheism reprobated and condemned. Whoever entertained the account, whether Jew or Gentile, could not avoid the following reflection:—"If these things be true, I must give up the opinions and principles in which I have been brought up, the religion in which my fathers lived and died." It is not conceivable that a man should do this upon any idle report or frivolous account, or indeed, without being fully satisfied and convinced of the truth and credibility of the narrative to which he trusted. But it did not stop at opinions. They who believed Christianity, acted upon it. Many made it the express business of their lives to publish the intelligence. It was required of those who admitted that intelligence, to change forthwith their conduct and their principles, to take up a different course of life, to part with their habits and gratifications, and begin a new set of rules, and system of behaviour. The apostles, at least, were interested not to sacrifice their ease, their fortunes, and their lives, for an idle tale; multitudes besides them were induced, by the same tale, to encounter opposition, danger, and sufferings.

If it be said, that the mere promise of a future state would do all this; I answer, that the mere promise of a future state, without any evidence to give credit or assurance to it, would do nothing. A few wandering fishermen talking of a resurrection of the dead, could produce no effect. If it be farther said, that men easily believe what they anxiously desire; I again answer that, in my opinion, the very contrary of this is nearer to the truth. Anxiety of desire, earnestness of expectation, the vastness of an event, rather cause men to disbelieve, to doubt, to dread a fallacy, to distrust, and to examine. When our Lord's resurrection was first reported to the apostles, they did not believe, we are told, for joy. This was natural, and is agreeable to experience.

VII. We have laid out of the case those accounts which require no more than a simple assent; and we now also lay out of the case those which come merely *in affirmance* of opinions already formed. This last circumstance is of the utmost importance to notice well. It has long been observed, that Popish miracles happen in

* Both these chapters ought to be read for the sake of this very observation.

† "There is always some truth where there are considerable particularities related; and they always seem to bear some proportion to one another. Thus there is a great want of the particulars of time, place, and persons, in Manetho's account of the Egyptian Dynasties, Ctesias's of the Assyrian Kings, and those which the technical chronologers have given of the ancient kingdoms of Greece: and agreeably thereto, the accounts have much fiction and falsehood, with some truth: whereas, Thucydides's History of the Peloponnesian War, and Cæsar's of the War in Gaul, in both which the particulars of time, place, and persons, are mentioned, are universally esteemed true to a great degree of exactness."—Hartley, vol. ii. p. 109.

Popish countries; that they make no converts: which proves that stories are accepted, when they fall in with principles already fixed, with the public sentiments, or with the sentiments of a party already engaged on the side the miracle supports, which would not be attempted to be produced in the face of enemies, in opposition to reigning tenets or favourite prejudices, or when, if they be believed, the belief must draw men away from their preconceived and habitual opinions, from their modes of life and rules of action. In the former case, men may not only receive a miraculous account, but may both act and suffer on the side and in the cause, which the miracle supports, yet not act or suffer for the miracle, but in pursuance of a prior persuasion. The miracle, like any other argument which only confirms what was before believed, is admitted with little examination. In the moral as in the natural world, it is *change* which requires a cause. Men are easily fortified in their old opinions, driven from them with great difficulty. Now how does this apply to the Christian history? The miracles, there recorded, were wrought in the midst of enemies, under a government, a priesthood, and a magistracy, decidedly and vehemently adverse to them, and to the pretensions which they supported. They were Protestant miracles in a Popish country; they were Popish miracles in the midst of Protestants. They produced a change; they established a society upon the spot, adhering to the belief of them; they made converts; and those who were converted gave up to the testimony their most fixed opinions and most favourite prejudices. They who acted and suffered in the cause, acted and suffered *for* the miracles: for there was no anterior persuasion to induce them, no prior reverence, prejudice, or partiality, to take hold of. Jesus had not one follower when he set up his claim. His miracles gave birth to his sect. No part of this description belongs to the ordinary evidence of Heathen or Popish miracles. Even most of the miracles alleged to have been performed by Christians, in the second and third century of its era, want this confirmation. It constitutes indeed a line of partition between the *origin* and the *progress* of Christianity. Frauds and fallacies might mix themselves with the progress, which could not possibly take place in the commencement of the religion; at least, according to any laws of human conduct that we are acquainted with. What should suggest to the first propagators of Christianity, especially to fishermen, tax-gatherers, and husbandmen, such a thought as that of changing the religion of the world; what could bear them through the difficulties in which the attempt engaged them; what could procure any degree of success to the attempt; are questions which apply, with great force, to the setting out of the institution, with less, to every future stage of it.

To hear some men talk, one would suppose the setting up of a religion by miracles to be a thing of every day's experience; whereas the whole current of history is against it. Hath any founder of a new sect amongst Christians pretended to miraculous powers, and succeeded by his pretensions? "Were these powers claimed or exercised by the founders of the sects of the Waldenses and Albigenses? Did Wickliffe in England pretend to it? Did Huss or Jerome in Bohemia? Did Luther in Germany, Zuinglius in Switzerland, Calvin in France, or any of the reformers, advance this plea?"* The French prophets, in the beginning of the present century, † ventured to allege miraculous evidence, and immediately ruined their cause by their temerity. "Concerning the religion of ancient Rome, of Turkey, of Siam, of China, a single miracle cannot be named, that was ever offered as a test of any of those religions *before* their establishment." ‡

We may add to what has been observed of the distinction which we are considering, that, where miracles are alleged merely in affirmance of a prior opinion, they who believe the doctrine may sometimes propagate a belief of the miracles which they do not themselves entertain. This is the case of what are called *pious* frauds; but it is a case, I apprehend, which takes place solely in support of a persuasion already established. At least it does not hold of the apostolical history. If the apostles did not believe the miracles, they did not believe the religion; and, without this belief, where was the *piety*, what place was there for any thing which could bear the name or colour of piety, in publishing and attesting miracles in its behalf? If it be said that any promote the belief of revelation, and of any accounts which favour that belief, because they think them, whether well or ill founded, of public and political utility; I answer, that if a character exist, which can with less justice than another be ascribed to the founders of the Christian religion, it is that of politicians, or of men capable of entertaining political views. The truth is, that there is no assignable character which will account for the conduct of the apostles, supposing their story to be false. If bad men, what could have induced them to take such pains to promote virtue? If good men, they would not have gone about the country with a string of lies in their mouths.

In appreciating the credit of any miraculous story, these are distinctions which relate to the evidence. There are other distinctions, of great moment in the question, which relate to the miracles themselves. Of which latter kind the following ought carefully to be retained.

I. It is not necessary to admit as a miracle, what can be resolved into a *false perception*. Of this nature was the demon of Socrates; the visions of Saint Anthony, and of many others; the vision which Lord Herbert of Cherbury describes himself to have seen; Colonel Gardner's vision, as related in his life, written by Dr. Doddridge. All these may be accounted for by a momentary insanity; for the characteristic symptom of human madness is the rising up in the mind of images not distinguishable by the patient from impressions upon the senses.§ The cases, however, in which the possibility of this delusion exists, are divided from the cases in which it does not exist, by many, and those not obscure marks. They are, for the most part, cases of visions or voices. The object is hardly ever touched. The vision submits not to be handled. One sense does not confirm another. They are likewise almost always cases of a *solitary* witness. It is in the highest degree improbable, and I know not, indeed, whether it hath ever been the fact, that the same derangement of the mental organs should seize

* Campbell on Miracles, p. 120. ed. 1766.
† The eighteenth. ‡ Adams on Mir. p. 75.
§ Batty on Lunacy.

different persons at the same time; a derangement, I mean, so much the same, as to represent to their imagination the same objects. Lastly, these are always cases of *momentary* miracles; by which term I mean to denote miracles, of which the whole existence is of short duration, in contradistinction to miracles which are attended with permanent effects. The appearance of a spectre, the hearing of a supernatural sound, is a momentary miracle. The sensible proof is gone, when the apparition or sound is over. But if a person born blind be restored to sight, a notorious cripple to the use of his limbs, or a dead man to life, here is a permanent effect produced by supernatural means. The change indeed was instantaneous, but the proof continues. The subject of the miracle remains. The man cured or restored is there: his former condition was known, and his present condition may be examined. This can by no possibility be resolved into false perception: and of this kind are by far the greater part of the miracles recorded in the New Testament. When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he did not merely move, and speak, and die again; or come out of the grave, and vanish away. He returned to his home and family, and there continued; for we find him, some time afterward in the same town, sitting at table with Jesus and his sisters; visited by great multitudes of the Jews, as a subject of curiosity; giving by his presence so much uneasiness to the Jewish rulers as to beget in them a design of destroying him.* No delusion can account for this. The French prophets in England, some time since, gave out that one of their teachers would come to life again; but their enthusiasm never made them believe that they actually saw him alive. The blind man, whose restoration to sight at Jerusalem is recorded in the ninth chapter of St. John's Gospel, did not quit the place or conceal himself from inquiry. On the contrary, he was forthcoming, to answer the call, to satisfy the scrutiny, and to sustain the brow-beating of Christ's angry and powerful enemies. When the cripple at the gate of the temple was suddenly cured by Peter,† he did not immediately relapse into his former lameness, or disappear out of the city; but boldly and honestly produced himself along with the apostles, when they were brought the next day before the Jewish council.‡ Here, though the miracle was sudden, the proof was permanent. The lameness had been notorious, the cure continued. This therefore, could not be the effect of any momentary delirium, either in the subject or in the witnesses of the transaction. It is the same with the greatest number of the Scripture miracles. There are other cases of a *mixed* nature, in which, although the principal miracle be momentary, some circumstance combined with it is permanent. Of this kind is the history of St. Paul's conversion.§ The sudden light and sound, the vision and the voice, upon the road to Damascus, were momentary: but Paul's blindness for three days in consequence of what had happened; the communication made to Ananias in another place, and by a vision independent of the former; Ananias finding out Paul in consequence of intelligence so received, and finding him in the condition described, and Paul's recovery of his sight upon Ananias's laying his hands upon him; are circumstances, which take the transaction, and the principal miracle as included in it, entirely out of the case of momentary miracles, or of such as may be accounted for by false perceptions. Exactly the same thing may be observed of Peter's vision preparatory to the call of Cornelius, and of its connexion with what was imparted in a distant place to Cornelius himself, and with the message dispatched by Cornelius to Peter. The vision might be a dream; the message could not. Either communication, taken separately, might be a delusion; the concurrence of the two was impossible to happen without a supernatural cause.

Beside the risk of delusion which attaches upon momentary miracles, there is also much more room for *imposture*. The account cannot be examined at the moment; and, when that is also a moment of hurry and confusion, it may not be difficult for men of influence to gain credit to any story which they may wish to have believed. This is precisely the case of one of the best attested of the miracles of Old Rome, the appearance of Castor and Pollux in the battle fought by Posthumius with the Latins at the lake Regillus. There is no doubt but that Posthumius after the battle, spread the report of such an appearance. No person could deny it whilst it was said to last. No person, perhaps, had any inclination to dispute it afterward; or, if they had, could say with positiveness, what was or what was not seen, by some or other of the army, in the dismay and amidst the tumult of a battle.

In assigning false perceptions as the origin to which some miraculous accounts may be referred, I have not mentioned claims to inspiration, illuminations, secret notices or directions, internal sensations, or consciousnesses of being acted upon by spiritual influences, good or bad; because these, appealing to no external proof, however convincing they may be to the persons themselves, form no part of what can be accounted miraculous evidence. Their own credibility stands upon their alliance with other miracles. The discussion, therefore, of all such pretensions may be omitted.

II. It is not necessary to bring into the comparison what may be called *tentative* miracles; that is, where, out of a great number of trials, some succeeded; and in the accounts of which, although the narrative of the successful cases be alone preserved, and that of the unsuccessful cases sunk, yet enough is stated to show that the cases produced are only a few out of many in which the same means have been employed. This observation bears, with considerable force, upon the ancient oracles and auguries, in which a single coincidence of the event with the prediction is talked of and magnified, whilst failures are forgotten, or suppressed, or accounted for. It is also applicable to the cures wrought by relics, and at the tombs of saints. The boasted efficacy of the king's touch, upon which Mr. Hume lays some stress, falls under the same description. Nothing is alleged concerning it, which is not alleged of various nostrums, namely, out of many thousands who have used them, certified proofs of a few who have recovered after them. No solution of this sort is applicable to the miracles of the Gospel. There is nothing in the narrative, which can induce, or even allow us to believe, that Christ attempted cures in many instances, and succeeded

* John xii. 1, 2, 9, 10.
† Acts iii. 2.
‡ Ib. iv. 14.
§ Ib. ix.

in a few; or that he ever made the attempt in vain. He did not profess to heal every where all that were sick; on the contrary, he told the Jews, evidently meaning to represent his own case, that, "although many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land, yet unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow:" and that "many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed saving Naaman the Syrian."* By which examples he gave them to understand, that it was not the nature of a divine interposition, or necessary to its purpose, to be general; still less to answer every challenge that might be made, which would teach men to put their faith upon these experiments. Christ never pronounced the word, but the effect followed.† It was not a thousand sick that received his benediction, and a few that were benefited; a single paralytic is let down in his bed at Jesus's feet, in the midst of a surrounding multitude; Jesus bid him walk, and he did so.‡ A man with a withered hand is in the synagogue; Jesus bid him stretch forth his hand, in the presence of the assembly, and it was "restored whole like the other."§ There was nothing tentative in these cures; nothing that can be explained by the power of accident.

We may observe also, that many of the cures which Christ wrought, such as that of a person blind from his birth, also many miracles beside cures, as raising the dead, walking upon the sea, feeding a great multitude with a few loaves and fishes, are of a nature which does not in any wise admit of the supposition of a fortunate experiment.

III. We may dismiss from the question all accounts in which, allowing the phenomenon to be real, the fact to be true, it still remains *doubtful* whether a miracle were wrought. This is the case with the ancient history of what is called the thundering legion, of the extraordinary circumstances which obstructed the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem by Julian, the circling of the flames and fragrant smell at the martyrdom of Polycarp, the sudden shower that extinguished the fire into which the Scriptures were thrown in the Diocletian persecution; Constantine's dream; his inscribing in consequence of it the cross upon his standard and the shields of his soldiers; his victory, and the escape of the standard-bearer; perhaps also the imagined appearance of the cross in the heavens, though this last circumstance is very deficient in historical evidence. It is also the case with the modern annual exhibition of the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius at Naples. It is a doubt likewise, which ought to be excluded by very special circumstances, from these narratives which relate to the supernatural cure of hypochondriacal and nervous complaints, and of all diseases which are much affected by the imagination. The miracles of the second and third century are, usually, healing the sick, and casting out evil spirits, miracles in which there is room for some error and deception. We hear nothing of causing the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the lepers to be cleansed.* There are also instances in Christian writers of reputed miracles, which were natural operations, though not known to be such at the time; as that of articulate speech after the loss of a great part of the tongue.

IV. To the same head of objection nearly, may also be referred accounts, in which the variation of a small circumstance may have transformed some extraordinary appearance, or some critical coincidence of events, into a miracle; stories, in a word, which may be resolved into exaggeration. The miracles of the Gospel can by no possibility be explained away in this manner. Total fiction will account for any thing; but no stretch of exaggeration that has any parallel in other histories, no force of fancy upon real circumstances, could produce the narratives which we now have. The feeding of the five thousand with a few loaves and fishes surpasses all bounds of exaggeration. The raising of Lazarus, of the widow's son at Nain, as well as many of the cures which Christ wrought, come not within the compass of misrepresentation. I mean, that it is impossible to assign any position of circumstances however peculiar, any accidental effects however extraordinary, any natural singularity, which could supply an origin or foundation to these accounts.

Having thus enumerated several exceptions, which may justly be taken to relations of miracles, it is necessary when we read the Scriptures, to bear in our minds this general remark; that, although there be miracles recorded in the New Testament, which fall within some or other of the exceptions here assigned, yet that they are united with others, to which none of the same exceptions extend, and that their credibility stands upon this union. Thus the visions and revelations which Saint Paul asserts to have been imparted to him, may not, in their separate evidence, be distinguishable from the visions and revelations which many others have alleged. But here is the difference. Saint Paul's pretensions were attested by external miracles wrought by himself, and by miracles wrought in the cause to which these visions relate; or, to speak more properly, the same historical authority which informs us of one, informs us of the other. This is not ordinarily true of the visions of enthusiasts, or even of the accounts in which they are contained. Again, some of Christ's own miracles were *momentary*; as the transfiguration, the appearance and voice from Heaven at his baptism, a voice from the clouds on one occasion afterward, (John xii. 28,) and some others. It is not denied, that the distinction which we have proposed concerning miracles of this species, applies, in diminution of the force of the evidence, as much to these instances as to others. But this is the case, not with all the

* Luke iv. 25.

† One, and only one, instance may be produced in which the *disciples* of Christ do seem to have attempted a cure, and not to have been able to perform it. The story is very ingenuously related by three of the evangelists.‖ The patient was afterward healed by Christ himself; and the whole transaction seems to have been intended, as it was well suited, to display the superiority of Christ above all who performed miracles in his name, a distinction which, during his presence in the world, it might be necessary to inculcate by some such proof as this.

‡ Mark ii. 3. § Matt. xii. 10.

‖ Matt. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 14. Luke ix. 33.

* Jortin's Remarks, vol. ii. p. 51.

miracles ascribed to Christ, nor with the greatest part, nor with many. Whatever force therefore there may be in the objection, we have numerous miracles which are free from it; and even these to which it is applicable, are little affected by it in their credit, because there are few who, admitting the rest, will reject *them*. If there be miracles of the New Testament, which come within any of the *other* heads into which we have distributed the objections, the same remark must be repeated. And this is one way, in which the unexampled number and variety of the miracles ascribed to Christ strengthens the credibility of Christianity. For it precludes any solution, or conjecture about a solution, which imagination, or even which experience, might suggest concerning some particular miracles, if considered independently of others. The miracles of Christ were of various kinds,* and performed in great varieties of situation, form, and manner; at Jerusalem, the metropolis of the Jewish nation and religion; in different parts of Judea and Galilee; in cities and villages; in synagogues, in private houses; in the street, in highways; with preparation, as in the case of Lazarus; by accident, as in the case of the widow's son of Nain; when attended by multitudes, and when alone with the patient; in the midst of his disciples, and in the presence of his enemies; with the common people around him, and before Scribes and Pharisees, and rulers of the synagogues.

I apprehend that, when we remove from the comparison, the cases which are fairly disposed of by the observations that have been stated, many cases will not remain. To those which do remain, we apply this final distinction; "that there is not satisfactory evidence, that persons, pretending to be original witnesses of the miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undertaken and undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and properly in consequence of their belief of the truth of those accounts."

CHAPTER II.

But they, with whom we argue, have undoubtedly a right to select their own examples. The instances with which Mr. Hume has chosen to confront the miracles of the New Testament, and which, therefore, we are entitled to regard as the strongest which the history of the world could supply to the inquiries of a very acute and learned adversary, are the three following:

I. The cure of a blind and of a lame man of Alexandria, by the emperor Vespasian, as related by Tacitus;

II. The restoration of the limb of an attendant in a Spanish church, as told by cardinal de Retz; and,

III. The cures said to be performed at the tomb of the abbé Paris, in the early part of the present century.

I. The narrative of Tacitus is delivered in these terms: "One of the common people of Alexandria, known to be diseased in his eyes, by the admonition of the god Serapis, whom that superstitious nation worship above all other gods, prostrated himself before the emperor, earnestly imploring from him a remedy for his blindness, and entreating that he would deign to anoint with his spittle his cheeks and the balls of his eyes. Another, diseased in his hand, requested, by the admonition of the same god, that he might be touched by the foot of the emperor. Vespasian at first derided and despised their application; afterward, when they continued to urge their petitions, he sometimes appeared to dread the imputation of vanity; at other times, by the earnest supplication of the patients, and the persuasion of his flatterers, to be induced to hope for success. At length he commanded an inquiry to be made by the physicians, whether such a blindness and debility were vincible by human aid. The report of the physicians contained various points; that in the one the power of vision was not destroyed, but would return if the obstacles were removed; that in the other, the diseased joints might be restored if a healing power were applied; that it was, perhaps, agreeable to the gods to do this; that the emperor was elected by divine assistance; lastly, that the credit of the success would be the emperor's, the ridicule of the disappointment would fall upon the patients. Vespasian, believing that every thing was in the power of his fortune, and that nothing was any longer incredible, whilst the multitude, which stood by, eagerly expected the event, with a countenance expressive of joy, executed what he was desired to do. Immediately the hand was restored to its use, and light returned to the blind man. They who were present relate both these cures, even at this time, when there is nothing to be gained by lying."*

Now, though Tacitus wrote this account twenty-seven years after the miracle is said to have been performed, and wrote at Rome of what passed at Alexandria, and wrote also from report: and although it does not appear that he had examined the story, or that he believed it (but rather the contrary,) yet I think his testimony sufficient to prove that such a transaction took place: by which I mean, that the two men in question did apply to Vespasian; that Vespasian did touch the diseased in the manner related; and that a cure was reported to have followed the operation. But the affair labours under a strong and just suspicion, that the whole of it was a concerted imposture brought about by collusion between the patients, the physician, and the emperor. This solution is probable, because there was every thing to suggest, and every thing to facilitate, such a scheme. The miracle was calculated to confer honour upon the emperor, and upon the god Serapis. It was achieved in the midst of the emperor's flatterers and followers; in a city, and amongst a populace, beforehand devoted to his interest, and to the worship of the god; where it would have been treason and blasphemy together, to have contradicted the fame of the cure, or even to have questioned it. And what is very observable in the account is, that

* Not only healing every species of disease, but turning water into wine (John ii); feeding multitudes with a few loaves and fishes (Matt. xiv. 15; Mark vi. 35; Luke ix. 12; John vi. 5); walking on the sea (Matt. xiv. 25); calming a storm (Matt. viii. 25; Luke viii. 24); a celestial voice at his baptism, and miraculous appearance (Matt. iii. 16; afterward John xii. 28); his transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1—8; Mark ix. 2; Luke ix. 28; 2 Peter i. 16, 17); raising the dead in three distinct instances (Matt. ix. 18; Mark v. 22; Luke viii. 41; Luke vii. 14; John xi.)

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iv.

the report of the physicians is just such a report as would have been made of a case, in which no external marks of the disease existed, and which, consequently, was capable of being easily counterfeited, *viz.* that in the first of the patients the organs of vision were not destroyed, that the weakness of the second was in his joints. The strongest circumstance in Tacitus's narration is, that the first patient was "*notus* tabe oculorum," remarked or notorious for the disease in his eyes. But this was a circumstance which might have found its way into the story in its progress from a distant country, and during an interval of thirty years; or it might be true that the malady of the eyes was notorious, yet that the nature and degree of the disease had never been ascertained; a case by no means uncommon. The emperor's reserve was easily affected; or it is possible he might not be in the secret. There does not seem to be much weight in the observation of Tacitus, that they who were present, continued even then to relate the story when there was nothing to be gained by the lie. It only proves that those who had told the story for many years persisted in it. The state of mind of the witnesses and spectators *at the time*, is the point to be attended to. Still less is there of pertinency in Mr. Hume's eulogium on the cautious and penetrating genius of the historian; for it does not appear that the historian believed it. The terms in which he speaks of Serapis, the deity to whose interposition the miracle was attributed, scarcely suffer us to suppose that Tacitus thought the miracle to be real: "by the admonition of the god Serapis, whom that superstitious nation (dedita superstitionibus gens) worship above all other gods." To have brought this supposed miracle within the limits of comparison with the miracles of Christ, it ought to have appeared, that a person of a low and private station, in the midst of enemies, with the whole power of the country opposing him, with every one around him prejudiced or interested against his claims and character, pretended to perform these cures, and required the spectators, upon the strength of what they saw, to give up their firmest hopes and opinions, and follow *him* through a life of trial and danger; that many were so moved as to obey his call, at the expense both of every notion in which they had been brought up, and of their ease, safety, and reputation; and that by these beginnings, a change was produced in the world, the effects of which remain to this day: a case, both in its circumstances and consequences, very unlike any thing we find in Tacitus's relation.

II. The story taken from the Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, which is the second example alleged by Mr. Hume, is this: "In the church of Saragossa in Spain, the canons showed me a man whose business it was to light the lamps; telling me that he had been several years at the gate with one leg only. I saw him with two."*

It is stated by Mr. Hume, that the cardinal, who relates this story, did not believe it: and it no where appears, that he either examined the limb, or asked the patient, or indeed any one, a single question about the matter. An artificial leg, wrought with art, would be sufficient, in a place where no such contrivance had ever before been heard of, to give origin and currency to the report. The ecclesiastics of the place would, it is probable, favour the story, inasmuch as it advanced the honour of their image and church. And if *they* patronised it, no other person at Saragossa, in the middle of the last century, would care to dispute it. The story likewise coincided, not less with the wishes and preconceptions of the people, than with the interests of their ecclesiastical rulers: so that there was prejudice backed by authority, and both operating upon extreme ignorance, to account for the success of the imposture. If, as I have suggested, the contrivance of an artificial limb was then new, it would not occur to the cardinal himself to suspect it; especially under the carelessness of mind with which he heard the tale, and the little inclination he felt to scrutinize or expose its fallacy.

III. The miracles related to have been wrought at the tomb of the abbé Paris, admit in general of this solution. The patients who frequented the tomb were so affected by their devotion, their expectation, the place, the solemnity, and, above all, by the sympathy of the surrounding multitude, that many of them were thrown into violent convulsions, which convulsions, in certain instances, produced a removal of disorders depending upon obstruction. We shall, at this day, have the less difficulty in admitting the above account, because it is the very same thing as hath lately been experienced in the operations of animal magnetism; and the report of the French physicians upon that mysterious remedy is very applicable to the present consideration, *viz.* that the pretenders to the art, by working upon the imaginations of their patients, were frequently able to produce convulsions; that convulsions so produced, are amongst the most powerful, but, at the same time, most uncertain and unmanageable applications to the human frame which can be employed.

Circumstances, which indicate this explication in the case of the Parisian miracles, are the following:

1. They were *tentative*. Out of many thousand sick, infirm, and diseased persons, who resorted to the tomb, the professed history of the miracles contains only nine cures.

2. The convulsions at the tomb are admitted.

3. The diseases were, for the most part, of that sort which depends upon inaction and obstruction, as dropsies, palsies, and some tumours.

4. The cures were gradual; some patients attending many days, some several weeks, and some several months.

5. The cures were many of them incomplete.

6. Others were temporary.*

So that all the wonder we are called upon to account for, is, that, out of an almost innumerable multitude which resorted to the tomb for the cure of their complaints, and many of whom were there agitated by strong convulsions, a very small proportion experienced a beneficial change in their constitution, especially in the action of the nerves and glands.

Some of the cases alleged, do not require that we should have recourse to this solution. The first case in the catalogue is scarcely distinguishable from the progress of a natural recovery. It was that of a young man, who laboured under an inflammation of one eye, and had lost the sight of the

* Liv. iv. A. D. 1654.

* The reader will find these particulars verified in the detail, by the accurate inquiries of the present bishop of Sarum, in his Criterion of Miracles, p. 132, &c.

other. The inflamed eye was relieved, but the blindness of the other remained. The inflammation had before been abated by medicine; and the young man, at the time of his attendance at the tomb, was using a lotion of laudanum. And, what is a still more material part of the case, the inflammation, after some interval returned. Another case was that of a young man who had lost his sight by the puncture of an awl, and the discharge of the aqueous humour through the wound. The sight, which had been gradually returning, was much improved during his visit to the tomb, that is, probably, in the same degree in which the discharged humour was replaced by fresh secretions. And it is observable, that these two are the only cases which, from their nature, should seem unlikely to be affected by convulsions.

In one material respect I allow that the Parisian miracles were different from those related by Tacitus, and from the Spanish miracle of the cardinal de Retz. They had not, like them, all the power and all the prejudice of the country on their side to begin with. They were alleged by one party against another, by the Jansenists against the Jesuits. These were of course opposed and examined by their adversaries. The consequence of which examination was, that many falsehoods were detected, that with something really extraordinary much fraud appeared to be mixed. And if some of the cases upon which designed misrepresentation could not be charged, were not at the time satisfactorily accounted for, it was because the efficacy of strong spasmodic affections was not then sufficiently known. Finally, the cause of Jansenism, did not rise by the miracles, but sunk, although the miracles had the anterior persuasion of all the numerous adherents of that cause to set out with.

These, let us remember, are the strongest examples, which the history of ages supplies. In none of them was the miracle *unequivocal;* by none of them, were established prejudices and persuasions overthrown; of none of them, did the credit make its way, in opposition to authority and power; by none of them, were many induced to commit themselves, and that in contradiction to prior opinions, to a life of mortification, danger, and sufferings; none were called upon to attest them, at the expense of their fortunes and safety.*

* It may be thought that the historian of the Parisian miracles, M. Montgeron, forms an exception to this last assertion. He presented his book (with a suspicion, as it should seem, of the danger of what he was doing) to the king; and was shortly afterward committed to prison, from which he never came out. Had the miracles been unequivocal, and had M. Montgeron been originally convinced by them, I should have allowed this exception. It would have stood, I think, alone, in the argument of our adversaries. But beside what has been observed of the dubious nature of the miracles, the account which M. Montgeron has himself left of his conversion, shows both the state of his mind, and *that his persuasion was not built upon external miracles.*— "Scarcely had he entered the churchyard, when he was struck (he tells us) with awe and reverence, having never before heard prayers pronounced with so much ardour and transport as he observed amongst the supplicants at the tomb. Upon this, throwing himself on his knees, resting his elbows on the tomb-stone, and covering his face with his hands, he spake the following prayer:—*O thou, by whose intercession so many miracles are said to be performed, if it be true that a part of thee surviveth the grave, and that thou hast influence with the Almighty, have pity on the darkness of my understanding, and through his mercy obtain the removal of it.*" Having prayed thus, "many thoughts (as he saith) began to open themselves to his mind; and so profound was his attention, that he continued on his knees four hours, not in the least disturbed by the vast crowd of surrounding supplicants. During this time, all the arguments which he ever heard or read in favour of Christianity, occurred to him with so much force, and seemed so strong and convincing, that he went home fully satisfied with the truth of religion in general, and of the holiness and power of that person, who, (as he supposed) had engaged the Divine Goodness to enlight en his understanding so suddenly."—Douglas's Crit. of Mir. p. 214.

PART II.

OF THE AUXILIARY EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

Prophecy.

Isaiah lii. 13. liii. "Behold, my Servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men); so shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them, shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider.—Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid, as it were, our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

These words are extant in a book, purporting to contain the predictions of a writer who lived seven centuries before the Christian era.

That material part of every argument from prophecy, namely, that the words alleged were actually spoken or written before the fact to which they are applied took place, or could by any natural means be foreseen is, in the present instance, incontestable. The record comes out of the custody of adversaries. The Jews, as an ancient father well observed, are our librarians. The passage is in their copies, as well as in ours. With many attempts to explain it away, none has ever been made by them to discredit its authenticity.

And, what adds to the force of the quotation is, that it is taken from a writing *declaredly prophetic;* a writing, professing to describe such future transactions and changes in the world, as were connected with the fate and interests of the Jewish nation. It is not a passage in an historical or devotional composition, which, because it turns out to be applicable to some future events, or to some future situation of affairs, is presumed to have been oracular. The words of Isaiah were delivered by him in a prophetic character, with the solemnity belonging to that character: and what he so delivered, was all along understood by the Jewish reader to refer to something that was to take place after the time of the author. The public sentiments of the Jews concerning the design of Isaiah's writings, are set forth in the book of Ecclesiasticus:* "He saw by an excellent spirit, what should come to pass at the last, and he comforted them that mourned in Sion. He showed what should come to pass for ever, and secret things or ever they came."

It is also an advantage which this prophecy possesses, that it is intermixed with no other subject. It is entire, separate, and uninterruptedly directed to one scene of things.

The *application* of the prophecy to the evangelic history is plain and appropriate. Here is no double sense; no figurative language, but what is sufficiently intelligible to every reader of every country. The obscurities (by which I mean the expressions that require a knowledge of local diction, and of local allusion) are few, and not of great importance. Nor have I found that varieties of reading, or a different construing of the original, produce any material alteration in the sense of the prophecy. Compare the common translation with that of bishop Lowth, and the difference is not considerable. So far as they do differ, bishop Lowth's corrections, which are the faithful result of an accurate examination, bring the description nearer to the New Testament history than it was before. In the fourth verse of the fifty-third chapter, what our Bible renders "stricken," he translates "judicially stricken:" and in the eighth verse, the clause, "he was taken from prison and from judgment," the bishop gives, "by an oppressive judgment he was taken off." The next words to these, "who shall declare his generation?" are much cleared up in their meaning by the bishop's version; "his manner of life who would declare?" *i. e.* who would stand forth in his defence? The former part of the ninth verse, "and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death," which inverts the circumstances of Christ's passion, the bishop brings out in an order perfectly agreeable to the event, "and his grave was appointed with the wicked, but with the rich man was his tomb." The words in the eleventh verse, "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many," are, in the bishop's version, "by the *knowledge of him* shall my righteous servant justify many."

It is natural to inquire what turn the Jews themselves give to this prophecy.* There is good proof that the ancient Rabbins explained it of their expected Messiah;† but their modern expositors concur, I think, in representing it as a description of the calamitous state and intended restoration of the Jewish people, who are here, as they say, exhibited under the character of a single person. I have not discovered that their exposition rests upon any critical arguments, or upon these in any other than a very minute degree. The clause in the ninth verse, which we render "for the transgression of my people was he stricken," and in the margin, "was the stroke upon him," the Jews read, "for the transgression of my people was the stroke upon *them.*" And what they allege in support of the alteration amounts only to this, that the Hebrew pronoun is capable of a plural as well as of a singular signification; that is to say, is capable of their construction as well as ours.‡ And this is all the variation contended for; the rest of the prophecy they

* Chap. xlviii. ver. 24.

* "Vaticinium hoc Esaiæ est carnificina Rabbinorum, de quo aliqui Judæi mihi confessi sunt, Rabbinos suos ex propheticis scripturis facile se extricare potuisse, *modo Esaias tacuisset.*"—Hulse, Theol. Jud. p. 318, quoted by Poole, in loc.

† Hulse, Theol. Jud. p. 430.

‡ Bishop Lowth adopts in this place the reading of the Seventy, which gives smitten *to death,* "for the transgression of my people was he smitten to death." The addition of the words "to death," makes an end of the Jewish interpretation of the clause. And the authority upon which this reading (though not given by the present Hebrew text) is adopted, Dr. Kennicot has set forth by an argument not only so cogent, but so clear and popular, that I beg leave to transcribe the substance of it into this note:—"Origen, after having quoted at large this prophecy concerning the Messiah, tells us, that, having once made use of this passage, in a dispute against some that were accounted wise among the Jews, one of them replied that the words did not mean one man, but one people, the Jews, who were smitten of God, and dispersed among the Gentiles for their conversion; that he then urged many parts of this prophecy, to show the absurdity of this interpretation, and that he seemed to press them the hardest by this sentence, —'for the transgression of my people was he smitten to death.' Now, as Origen, the author of the Hexapla, must have understood Hebrew, we cannot suppose that he would have urged this last text as so decisive, if the Greek version had not agreed here with the Hebrew text; nor that these wise Jews would have been at all distressed by this quotation, unless the Hebrew text had read agreeably to the words 'to death,' on which the argument principally depended; for, by quoting it immediately, they would have triumphed over him, and reprobated his Greek version. This, whenever they could do it, was their constant practice in their disputes with the Christians. Origen himself, who laboriously compared the Hebrew text with the Septuagint, has recorded the necessity of arguing with the Jews, from such passages only as were in the Septuagint agreeable to the Hebrew. Wherefore, as Origen had carefully compared the Greek version of the Septuagint with the Hebrew text; and as he puzzled and confounded the learned Jews, by urging upon them the reading 'to death,' in this place; it seems almost impossible not to conclude, both from Origen's argument, and the silence of his Jewish adversaries, that the Hebrew text at that time actually had the word agreeably to the version of the Seventy."—Lowth's Isaiah, p. 242.

read as we do. The probability, therefore, of their exposition, is a subject which we are as capable of judging as themselves. This judgment is open indeed to the good sense of every attentive reader. The application which the Jews contend for, appears to me to labour under insuperable difficulties; in particular it may be demanded of them to explain, in *whose* name or person, if the Jewish people be the sufferer, does the prophet speak, when he says, "He hath borne *our* griefs, and carried *our* sorrows, yet *we* did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; but he was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities, the chastisement of *our* peace was upon him, and with his stripes *we* are healed." Again, the description in the seventh verse, "he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth," quadrates with no part of the Jewish history with which we are acquainted. The mention of the "grave," and the "tomb," in the ninth verse, is not very applicable to the fortunes of a nation; and still less so is the conclusion of the prophecy in the twelfth verse, which expressly represents the sufferings as *voluntary*, and the sufferer as interceding for the offenders; "because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

There are other prophecies of the Old Testament, interpreted by Christians to relate to the Gospel history, which are deserving both of great regard, and of a very attentive consideration: but I content myself with stating the above, as well because I think it the clearest and the strongest of all, as because most of the rest, in order that their value might be represented with any tolerable degree of fidelity, require a discussion unsuitable to the limits and nature of this work. The reader will find them disposed in order, and distinctly explained, in bishop Chandler's treatise on the subject: and he will bear in mind, what has been often, and, I think, truly, urged by the advocates of Christianity, that there is no other eminent person, to the history of whose life so many circumstances can be made to apply. They who object that much has been done by the power of chance, the ingenuity of accommodation, and the industry of research, ought to try whether the same, or any thing like it, could be done, if Mahomet, or any other person, were proposed as the subject of Jewish prophecy.

II. A second head of argument from prophecy, is founded upon our Lord's predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, recorded by three out of the four evangelists.

Luke xxi. 5—25. "And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived, for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by-and-by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before, what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out: and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days: for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

In terms nearly similar, this discourse is related in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and the thirteenth of Mark. The prospect of the same evils drew from our Saviour, on another occasion, the following affecting expressions of concern, which are preserved by St. Luke (xix. 41—44.) "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."—These passages are direct and explicit predictions. References to the same event, some plain, some parabolical, or otherwise figurative, are found in divers other discourses of our Lord.*

The general agreement of the description with the event, viz. with the ruin of the Jewish nation, and the capture of Jerusalem under Vespasian, thirty-six years after Christ's death, is most evident; and the accordancy in various articles of detail and circumstances has been shown by many learned writers. It is also an advantage to the inquiry, and to the argument built upon it, that we have received a copious account of the transaction from Josephus, a Jewish and contemporary historian. This part of the case is perfectly free from doubt. The only question which, in my opinion,

* Matt. xxi. 33—46; xxii. 1—7. Mark xii. 1—12. Luke xiii. 1—9; xx. 9—20; xxi. 5—13.

can be raised upon the subject, is whether the prophecy was really delivered *before* the event; I shall apply, therefore, my observations to this point solely.

1. The judgment of antiquity, though varying in the precise year of the publication of the three Gospels, *concurs* in assigning them a date prior to the destruction of Jerusalem.*

2. This judgment is confirmed by a strong probability arising from the course of human life. The destruction of Jerusalem took place in the seventieth year after the birth of Christ. The three evangelists, one of whom was his immediate companion, and the other two associated with his companions, were, it is probable, not much younger than he was. They must, consequently, have been far advanced in life when Jerusalem was taken; and no reason has been given why they should defer writing their histories so long.

3. † If the evangelists, at the time of writing the Gospels, had known of the destruction of Jerusalem, by which catastrophe the prophecies were plainly fulfilled, it is most probable, that, in recording the predictions, they would have dropped some word or other about the completion; in like manner as Luke, after relating the denunciation of a dearth by Agabus, adds, "which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar:"‡ whereas the prophecies are given distinctly in one chapter of each of the first three Gospels, and referred to in several different passages of each, and, in none of all these places, does there appear the smallest intimation that the things spoken of had come to pass. I do admit, that it would have been the part of an impostor, who wished his readers to believe that his book was written before the event, when in truth it was written after it, to have suppressed any such intimation carefully. But this was not the character of the authors of the Gospel. Cunning was no quality of theirs. Of all writers in the world, they thought the least of providing against objections. Moreover, there is no clause in any one of them, that makes a profession of their having written prior to the Jewish wars, which a fraudulent purpose would have led them to pretend. They have done neither one thing nor the other: they have neither inserted any words which might signify to the reader that their accounts were written *before* the destruction of Jerusalem, which a sophist would have done; nor have they dropped a hint of the completion of the prophecies recorded by them, which an *undesigning* writer, writing *after* the event, could hardly, on some or other of the many occasions that presented themselves, have missed of doing.

4. The admonitions§ which Christ is represented to have given to his followers to save themselves by flight, are not easily accounted for, on the supposition of the prophecy being fabricated after the event. Either the Christians, when the siege approached, did make their escape from Jerusalem, or they did not: if they did, they must have had the prophecy amongst them: if they did not know of any such prediction at the time of the siege, if they did not take notice of any such warning, it was an improbable fiction, in a writer publishing his work near to that time (which, on any even the lowest and most disadvantageous supposition, was the case with the Gospels now in our hands,) and addressing his work to Jews and to Jewish converts (which Matthew certainly did,) to state that the followers of Christ had received admonition of which they made no use when the occasion arrived, and of which experience then recent proved, that those, who were most concerned to know and regard them, were ignorant or negligent. Even if the prophecies came to the hands of the evangelists through no better vehicle than tradition, it must have been by a tradition which subsisted prior to the event. And to suppose that, without any authority whatever, without so much as even any tradition to guide them, they had forged these passages, is to impute to them a degree of fraud and imposture, from every appearance of which their compositions are as far removed as possible.

5. I think that, if the prophecies had been composed after the event, there would have been more specification. The names or descriptions of the enemy, the general, the emperor, would have been found in them. The designation of the time would have been more determinate. And I am fortified in this opinion by observing, that the counterfeited prophecies of the Sibylline oracles, of the twelve patriarchs, and I am inclined to believe, most others of the kind, are mere transcripts of the history, moulded into a prophetic form.

It is objected, that the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem is mixed, or connected, with expressions which relate to the final judgment of the world; and so connected, as to lead an ordinary reader to expect, that these two events would not be far distant from each other. To which I answer, that the objection does not concern our present argument. If our Saviour actually foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, it is sufficient; even although we should allow, that the narration of the prophecy had combined what had been said by him on kindred subjects, without accurately preserving the order, or always noticing the transition of the discourse.

CHAPTER II.

The Morality of the Gospel.

In stating the morality of the Gospel as an argument of its truth, I am willing to admit two points; first, that the teaching of morality was not the primary design of the mission; secondly, that morality, neither in the Gospel, nor in any other book, can be a subject, properly speaking, of discovery.

If I were to describe in a very few words the scope of Christianity, as a *revelation*,* I should

* Lardner, vol. xiii.

† Le Clerc, Diss. III. de Quat. Evang. num. vii. p. 541.

‡ Acts xi. 28.

§ "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh; then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; then let them which are in the midst of it depart out, and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto."—Luke xxi. 20, 21.

"When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then let them which be in Judea flee unto the mountains; let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes."—Matt. xiv. 18.

* Great and inestimably beneficial effects may accrue from the mission of Christ, and especially from his death, which do not belong to Christianity as a *revela-*

say, that it was to influence the conduct of human life, by establishing the proof of a future state of reward and punishment,—"to bring life and immortality to light." The direct object, therefore, of the design is, to supply motives, and not rules; sanctions, and not precepts. And these were what mankind stood most in need of. The members of civilized society can, in all ordinary cases, judge tolerably well how they ought to act: but without a future state, or, which is the same thing, without credited evidence of that state, they want a *motive* to their duty; they want at least strength of motive, sufficient to bear up against the force of passion, and the temptation of present advantage. Their rules want authority. The most important service that can be rendered to human life, and that consequently, which, one might expect beforehand, would be the great end and office of a revelation from God, is to convey to the world authorised assurances of the reality of a future existence. And although in doing this, or by the ministry of the same person by whom this is done, moral precepts or examples, or illustrations of moral precepts, may be occasionally given, and be highly valuable, yet still they do not form the original purpose of the mission.

Secondly; morality, neither in the Gospel, nor in any other book, can be a subject of discovery, properly so called. By which proposition, I mean that there cannot, in morality, be any thing similar to what are called discoveries in natural philosophy, in the arts of life, and in some sciences; as the system of the Universe, the circulation of the blood, the polarity of the magnet, the laws of gravitation, alphabetical writing, decimal arithmetic, and some other things of the same sort; facts, or proofs, or contrivances, before totally unknown and unthought of. Whoever, therefore, expects, in reading the New Testament, to be struck with discoveries in morals in the manner in which his mind was affected when he first came to the knowledge of the discoveries above-mentioned; or rather in the manner in which the world was affected by them, when they were first published; expects what, as I apprehend, the nature of the subject renders it impossible that he should meet with. And the foundation of my opinion is this, that the qualities of actions depend entirely upon their effects, which effects must all along have been the subject of human experience.

When it is once settled, no matter upon what principle, that to do good is virtue, the rest is calculation. But since the calculation cannot be instituted concerning each particular action, we establish intermediate rules; by which proceeding, the business of morality is much facilitated, for then it is concerning our rules alone that we need inquire, whether in their tendency they be beneficial; concerning our actions, we have only to ask, whether they be agreeable to the rules. We refer actions to rules, and rules to public happiness. Now in the formation of these rules there is no place for discovery, properly so called, but there is ample room for the exercise of wisdom, judgment, and prudence.

As I wish to deliver argument rather than panegyric, I shall treat of the morality of the Gospel, in subjection to these observations. And after all, I think it such a morality, as considering from whom it came, is most extraordinary; and such as, without allowing some degree of reality to the character and pretensions of the religion, it is difficult to account for: or, to place the argument a little lower in the scale, it is such a morality as completely repels the supposition of its being the tradition of a barbarous age or of a barbarous people, of the religion being founded in folly, or of its being the production of craft; and it repels also, in a great degree, the supposition of its having been the effusion of an enthusiastic mind.

The division, under which the subject may be most conveniently treated, is that of the things taught, and the manner of teaching.

Under the first head, I should willingly, if the limits and nature of my work admitted of it, transcribe into this chapter the whole of what has been said upon the morality of the Gospel, by the author of *The Internal Evidence of Christianity*; because it perfectly agrees with my own opinion, and because it is impossible to say the same things so well. This acute observer of human nature, and, as I believe, sincere convert to Christianity, appears to me to have made out satisfactorily the two following positions, *viz.*

I. That the Gospel omits some qualities, which have usually engaged the praises and admiration of mankind, but which, in reality, and in their general effects, have been prejudicial to human happiness.

II. That the Gospel has brought forward some virtues, which possess the highest intrinsic value, but which have commonly been overlooked and contemned.

The first of these propositions he exemplifies in the instances of friendship, patriotism, active courage; in the sense in which these qualities are usually understood, and in the conduct which they often produce.

The second, in the instances of passive courage or endurance of sufferings, patience under affronts and injuries, humility, irresistance, placability.

The truth is, there are two opposite descriptions of character, under which mankind may generally be classed. The one possesses vigour, firmness, resolution; is daring and active, quick in its sensibilities, jealous of its fame, eager in its attachments, inflexible in its purpose, violent in its resentments.

The other, meek, yielding, complying, forgiving; not prompt to act, but willing to suffer; silent and gentle under rudeness and insult, suing for reconciliation where others would demand satisfaction, giving way to the pushes of impudence, conceding and indulgent to the prejudices, the wrongheadedness, the intractability, of those with whom it has to deal.

The former of these characters is, and ever hath been, the favourite of the world. It is the character of great men. There is a dignity in it which universally commands respect.

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tion; that is, they might have existed, and they might have been accomplished, though we had never, in this life, been made acquainted with them. These effects may be very extensive: they may be interesting even to other orders of intelligent beings. I think it is a general opinion, and one to which I have long come, that the beneficial effects of Christ's death extend to the whole human species. It was the redemption of *the world.* "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the whole world;" 1 John ii. 2. Probably the future happiness, perhaps the future existence of the species, and more gracious terms of acceptance extended *to all*, might depend upon it, or be procured by it. Now these effects, whatever they be, do not belong to Christianity as a *revelation;* because they exist with respect to those to whom *it is not revealed.*

The latter is poor-spirited, tame, and abject. Yet so it hath happened, that, with the Founder of Christianity, this latter is the subject of his commendation, his precepts, his example; and that the former is so, in no part of its composition. This and nothing else, is the character designed in the following remarkable passages: "Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also: and if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also: and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain: love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." This certainly is not common-place morality. It is very original. It shows at least (and it is for this purpose we produce it) that no two things can be more different than the Heroic and the Christian character.

Now the author, to whom I refer, has not only marked this difference more strongly than any preceding writer, but has proved, in contradiction to first impressions, to popular opinion, to the encomiums of orators and poets, and even to the suffrages of historians and moralists, that the latter character possesses the most of true worth, both as being most difficult either to be acquired or sustained, and as contributing most to the happiness and tranquillity of social life. The state of his argument is as follows:

I. If this disposition were universal, the case is clear; the world would be a society of friends. Whereas, if the other disposition were universal, it would produce a scene of universal contention. The world could not hold a generation of such men.

II. If, what is the fact, the disposition be partial; if a few be actuated by it, amongst a multitude who are not; in whatever degree it does prevail, in the same proportion it prevents, allays, and terminates, quarrels, the great disturbers of human happiness, and the great sources of human misery, so far as man's happiness and misery depend upon man. Without this disposition, enmities must not only be frequent, but, once begun, must be eternal: for, each retaliation being a fresh injury, and, consequently, requiring a fresh *satisfaction*, no period can be assigned to the reciprocation of affronts, and to the progress of hatred, but that which closes the lives, or at least the intercourse, of the parties.

I would only add to these observations, that although the former of the two characters above described may be occasionally useful; although, perhaps, a great general, or a great statesman, may be formed by it, and these may be instruments of important benefits to mankind, yet is this nothing more than what is true of many qualities, which are acknowledged to be vicious. *Envy* is a quality of this sort; I know not a stronger stimulus to exertion; many a scholar, many an artist, many a soldier, has been produced by it; nevertheless, since in its general effects it is noxious, it is properly condemned, certainly is not praised, by sober moralists.

It was a portion of the same character as that we are defending, or rather of his love of the same character, which our Saviour displayed, in his repeated correction of the ambition of his disciples; his frequent admonitions, that greatness with them was to consist in humility; his censure of that love of distinction, and greediness of superiority, which the chief persons amongst his countrymen were wont, on all occasions, great and little, to betray. "They (the Scribes and Pharisees) love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren; and call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father, which is in heaven; neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ; but he that is greatest among *you*, shall be your servant: and whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."* I make no farther remark upon these passages, (because they are, in truth, only a repetition of the doctrine, different expressions of the principle, which we have already stated,) except that some of the passages, especially our Lord's advice to the guests at an entertainment,† seem to extend the rule to what we call *manners*; which was both regular in point of consistency, and not so much beneath the dignity of our Lord's mission as may at first sight be supposed, for bad manners are bad morals.

It is sufficiently apparent, that the precepts we have cited, or rather the disposition which these precepts inculcate, relate to personal conduct from personal motives; to cases in which men act from impulse, for themselves, and from themselves. When it comes to be considered, what is necessary to be done for the sake of the public, and out of a regard to the general welfare (which consideration, for the most part, ought exclusively to govern the duties of men in public stations,) it comes to a case to which the rules do not belong. This distinction is plain; and if it were less so, the consequence would not be much felt: for it is very seldom that, in the intercourse of private life, men act with public views. The personal motives, from which they do act the rule regulates.

The preference of the patient to the heroic character, which we have here noticed, and which the reader will find explained at large in the work to which we have referred him, is a peculiarity in the Christian institution, which I propose as an argument of wisdom very much beyond the situation and natural character of the person who delivered it.

II. A *second* argument, drawn from the morality of the New Testament, is the stress which is laid by our Saviour upon the regulation of the thoughts. And I place this consideration next to the other, because they are connected. The other related to the malicious passions; this, to the voluptuous. Together, they comprehend the whole character.

"Out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications," &c.—"These are the things which defile a man."‡

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but *within* they are full of extortion and excess.—Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness; even so ye also outwardly appear

* Matt. xxiii. 6. See also Mark xii. 39. Luke xx. 46; xiv. 7.

† Luke xiv. 7.

‡ Matt. xv. 19.

righteous unto men, but *within* ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."*

And more particularly that strong expression,† "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

There can be no doubt, with any reflecting mind, but that the propensities of our nature must be subject to regulation; but the question is *where* the check ought to be placed, upon the thought, or only upon the action? In this question, our Saviour, in the texts here quoted, has pronounced a decisive judgment. He makes the control of thought essential. Internal purity with him is every thing. Now I contend that this is the only discipline which can succeed; in other words, that a moral system, which prohibits actions, but leaves the thoughts at liberty, will be ineffectual, and is therefore unwise. I know not how to go about the proof of a point, which depends upon experience, and upon a knowledge of the human constitution, better than by citing the judgment of persons, who appear to have given great attention to the subject, and to be well qualified to form a true opinion about it. Boerhaave, speaking of this very declaration of our Saviour, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart," and understanding it, as we do, to contain an injunction to lay the check upon the thoughts, was wont to say, that "our Saviour knew mankind better than Socrates." Haller, who has recorded this saying of Boerhaave, adds to it the following remarks of his own:‡ "It did not escape the observation of our Saviour, that the rejection of any evil thoughts was the best defence against vice: for when a debauched person fills his imagination with impure pictures, the licentious ideas which he recalls, fail not to stimulate his desires with a degree of violence which he cannot resist. This will be followed by gratification, unless some external obstacle should prevent him from the commission of a sin, which he had internally resolved on." "Every moment of time," says our author, "that is spent in meditations upon sin, increases the power of the dangerous object which has possessed our imagination." I suppose these reflections will be generally assented to.

III. Thirdly, Had a teacher of morality been asked concerning a general principle of conduct, and for a short rule of life; and had he instructed the person who consulted him, "constantly to refer his actions to what he believed to be the will of his Creator, and constantly to have in view not his own interest and gratification alone, but the happiness and comfort of those about him," he would have been thought, I doubt not, in any age of the world, and in any, even the most improved, state of morals, to have delivered a judicious answer; because, by the first direction, he suggested the only motive which acts steadily and uniformly, in sight and out of sight, in familiar occurrences and under pressing temptations; and in the second, he corrected, what, of all tendencies in the human character, stands most in need of correction, *selfishness*, or a contempt of other men's conveniency and satisfaction. In estimating the value of a moral rule, we are to have regard not only to the particular duty, but the general spirit; not only to what it directs us to do, but to the character which a compliance with its direction is likely to form in us. So, in the present instance, the rule here recited will never fail to make him who obeys it *considerate*, not only of the rights, but of the feelings of other men, bodily and mental, in great matters and in small; of the ease, the accommodation, the self-complacency, of all with whom he has any concern, especially of all who are in his power, or dependant upon his will.

Now what, in the most applauded philosopher of the most enlightened age of the world, would have been deemed worthy of his wisdom, and of his character, to say, our Saviour hath said, and upon just such an occasion as that which we have feigned.

"Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."*

The second precept occurs in Saint Matthew (xix. 16) on another occasion similar to this; and both of them, on a third similar occasion, in Luke (x. 27.) In these two latter instances, the question proposed was, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Upon all these occasions, I consider the words of our Saviour as expressing precisely the same thing as what I have put into the mouth of the moral philosopher. Nor do I think that it detracts much from the merit of the answer, that these precepts are extant in the Mosaic code; for his laying his finger, if I may so say, upon these precepts; his drawing them out from the rest of that voluminous institution; his stating of them, not simply amongst the number, but as the greatest and the sum of all the others; in a word, his proposing of them to his hearers for their rule and principle, was our Saviour's own.

And what our Saviour had said upon the subject, appears to me to have *fixed* the sentiment amongst his followers.

St. Paul has it expressly, "If there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;"† and again, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."‡

Saint John, in like manner, "This commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also."§

Saint Peter, not very differently: "Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."‖

And it is so well known, as to require no citations to verify it, that this love, or charity, or, in other words, regard to the welfare of others, runs in various forms through all the preceptive parts of the apostolic writings. It is the theme of all their exhortations, that with which their morality

* Matt. xxiii. 25, 27. † Matt. v. 28.
‡ Letters to his Daughter.

* Matt. xxii. 35—40. † Rom. xiii. 9.
‡ Gal. v. 14. § 1 John iv. 21.
‖ 1 Peter i. 22.

begins and ends, from which all their details and enumerations set out, and into which they return.

And that this temper, for some time at least, descended in its purity to succeeding Christians, is attested by one of the earliest and best of the remaining writings of the apostolical fathers, the epistle of the Roman Clement. The meekness of the Christian character reigns throughout the whole of that excellent piece. The occasion called for it. It was to compose the dissensions of the church of Corinth. And the venerable hearer of the apostles does not fall short, in the display of this principle, of the finest passages of their writings. He calls to the remembrance of the Corinthian church its former character, in which "ye were all of you," he tells them, "humble-minded, not boasting of any thing, desiring rather to be subject than to govern, to give than to receive, being content with the portion God had dispensed to you, and hearkening diligently to his word; ye were enlarged in your bowels, having his sufferings always before your eyes. Ye contended day and night for the whole brotherhood, that with compassion and a good conscience the number of his elect might be saved. Ye were sincere, and without offence, towards each other. Ye bewailed every one his neighbours' sins, esteeming their defects your own."* His prayer for them was for the "return of peace, long-suffering, and patience."† And his advice to those, who might have been the occasion of difference in the society, is conceived in the true spirit, and with a perfect knowledge, of the Christian character: "Who is there among you that is generous? who that is compassionate? who that has any charity? Let him say, If this sedition, this contention, and these schisms, be upon my account, I am ready to depart, to go away whithersoever ye please, and do whatsoever ye shall command me: only let the flock of Christ be in peace with the elders who are set over it. He that shall do this, shall get to himself a very great honour in the Lord; and there is no place but what will be ready to receive him: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. These things they, who have their conversation towards God, not to be repented of, both have done, and will always be ready to do."‡

This sacred principle, this earnest recommendation of forbearance, lenity, and forgiveness, mixes with all the writings of that age. There are more quotations in the apostolical fathers, of texts which relate to these points, than of any other. Christ's sayings had struck them. "Not rendering," said Polycarp, the disciple of John, "evil for evil, or railing for railing, or striking for striking, or cursing for cursing."§ Again, speaking of some, whose behaviour had given great offence, "Be ye moderate," says he, "on this occasion, and look not upon such as enemies, but call them back as suffering and erring members, that ye save your whole body."‖

"Be ye mild at their anger," saith Ignatius, the companion of Polycarp, "humble at their boastings, to their blasphemies return your prayers, to their error your firmness in the faith; when they are cruel, be ye gentle; not endeavouring to imitate their ways, let us be their brethren in all kindness and moderation: but let us be followers of the Lord; for who was ever more unjustly used, more destitute, more despised?"

IV. A fourth quality, by which the morality of the Gospel is distinguished, is the exclusion of regard to fame and reputation.

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them, otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven."*

"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."†

And the rule, by parity of reason, is extended to all other virtues.

I do not think, that either in these, or in any other passage of the New Testament, the pursuit of fame is stated as a vice; it is only said that an action, to be virtuous, must be independent of it. I would also observe, that it is not publicity, but ostentation which is prohibited; not the mode, but the motive, of the action, which is regulated. A good man will prefer that mode, as well as those objects of his beneficence, by which he can produce the greatest effect; and the view of this purpose may dictate sometimes publication, and sometimes concealment. Either the one or the other may be the *mode* of the action, according as the end to be promoted by it appears to require. But from the *motive*, the reputation of the deed, and the fruits and advantage of that reputation to ourselves, must be shut out, or, in whatever proportion they are not so, the action in that proportion fails of being virtuous.

This exclusion of regard to human opinion, is a difference, not so much in the duties to which the teachers of virtue would persuade mankind, as in the manner and topics of persuasion. And in this view the difference is great. When *we* set about to give advice, our lectures are full of the advantages of character, of the regard that is due to appearances and to opinion; of what the world, especially of what the good or great, will think and say; of the value of public esteem, and of the qualities by which men acquire it. Widely different from this was our Saviour's instruction; and the difference was founded upon the best reasons. For, however the care of reputation, the authority of public opinion, or even of the opinion of good men, the satisfaction of being well received and well thought of, the benefit of being known and distinguished, are topics to which we are fain to have recourse in our exhortations; the true virtue is that which discards these considerations absolutely, and which retires from them all to the single internal purpose of pleasing God. This at least was the virtue which our Saviour taught. And in teaching this, he not only confined the views of his followers to the proper measure and principle of human duty, but acted in consistency with his office as a monitor from heaven.

NEXT to what our Saviour taught, may be considered the manner of his teaching: which was extremely peculiar, yet, I think, precisely adapted to the peculiarity of his character and situation. His lessons did not consist of disquisitions; of any thing like moral essays, or like sermons, or like

* Ep. Clem. Rom. c. 2; Abp. Wake's Translation.
† Ib. c. 53.
‡ Ib. c. 54.
§ Pol. Ep. Ad. Phil. c. 2.
‖ Ib. c. 11.

* Matt. vi. 1.
† Matt. vi. 6.

set treatises upon the several points which he mentioned. When he delivered a precept, it was seldom that he added any proof or argument: still more seldom, that he accompanied it with, what all precepts require, limitations and distinctions. His instructions were conceived in short, emphatic, sententious rules, in occasional reflections, or in round maxims. I do not think that this was a natural, or would have been a proper method for a philosopher or a moralist; or that it is a method which can be successfully imitated by us. But I contend that it was suitable to the character which Christ assumed, and to the situation in which, as a teacher, he was placed. He produced himself as a messenger from God. He put the truth of what he taught upon authority.* In the choice, therefore, of his mode of teaching, the purpose by him to be consulted was *impression:* because conviction, which forms the principal end of our discourses, was to arise in the minds of his followers from a different source, from their respect to his person and authority. Now, for the purpose of impression singly and exclusively (I repeat again, that we are not here to consider the convincing of the understanding), I know nothing which would have so great force as strong ponderous maxims, frequently urged, and frequently brought back to the thoughts of the hearers. I know nothing that could in this view be said better, than "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you:" "The first and great commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." It must also be remembered, that our Lord's ministry, upon the supposition either of one year or three, compared with his work, was of short duration; that, within this time, he had many places to visit, various audiences to address; that his person was generally besieged by crowds of followers: that he was sometimes driven away from the place where he was teaching by persecution, and at other times, thought fit to withdraw himself from the commotions of the populace. Under these circumstances, nothing appears to have been so practicable, or likely to be so efficacious, as leaving, wherever he came, concise lessons of duty. These circumstances at least show the necessity he was under, of comprising what he delivered within a small compass. In particular, his sermon upon the mount ought always to be considered with a view to these observations. The question is not, whether a fuller, a more accurate, a more systematic, or a more argumentative, discourse upon morals might not have been pronounced; but whether more could have been said in the same room, better adapted to the exigencies of the hearers, or better calculated for the purpose of impression? Seen in this light, it has always appeared to me to be admirable. Dr. Lardner thought that this discourse was made up of what Christ had said at different times, and on different occasions, several of which occasions are noticed in St. Luke's narrative. I can perceive no reason for this opinion. I believe that our Lord delivered this discourse at one time and place, in the manner related by Saint Matthew, and that he repeated the same rules and maxims at different times, as opportunity or occasion suggested; that they were often in his mouth, and were repeated to different audiences, and in various conversations.

It is incidental to this mode of moral instruction, which proceeds not by proof but upon authority, not by disquisition but by precept, that the rules will be conceived in absolute terms, leaving the application, and the distinctions that attend it, to the reason of the hearer. It is likewise to be expected that they will be delivered in terms by so much the more forcible and energetic, as they have to encounter natural or general propensities. It is farther also to be remarked, that many of those strong instances, which appear in our Lord's sermon, such as, "If any man will smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also:" "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also:" "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain:" though they appear in the form of specific precepts, are intended as descriptive of disposition and character. A specific compliance with the precepts would be of little value, but the disposition which they inculcate is of the highest. He who should content himself with waiting for the occasion, and with literally observing the rule when the occasion offered, would do nothing or worse than nothing: but he who considers the character and disposition which is hereby inculcated, and places that disposition before him as the model to which he should bring his own, takes, perhaps, the best possible method of improving the benevolence, and of calming and rectifying the vices, of his temper.

If it be said that this disposition is unattainable, I answer, so is all perfection: ought therefore a moralist to recommend imperfections? One excellency, however, of our Saviour's rules, is, that they are either never mistaken, or never so mistaken as to do harm. I could feign a hundred cases, in which the literal application of the rule, "of doing to others as we would that others should do unto us," might mislead us: but I never yet met with the man who was actually misled by it. Notwithstanding that our Lord bade his followers "not to resist evil," and "to forgive the enemy who should trespass against them, not till seven times, but till seventy times seven," the Christian world has hitherto suffered little by too much placability or forbearance. I would repeat once more, what has already been twice remarked, that these rules were designed to regulate personal conduct from personal motives, and for this purpose alone.

I think that these observations will assist us greatly in placing our Saviour's conduct, as a moral teacher, in a proper point of view; especially when it is considered, that to deliver moral disquisitions was no part of his design,—to teach morality at all was only a subordinate part of it; his great business being to supply, what was much more wanting than lessons of morality, stronger moral sanctions, and clearer assurances of a future judgment.*

* "*I* say unto you, Swear not at all; *I* say unto you, Resist not evil; *I* say unto you, Love your enemies."—Matt. v. 34. 39. 44.

* Some appear to require a religious system, or, in the books which profess to deliver that system, minute directions, for every case and occurrence that may arise. This, say they, is necessary to render a revelation perfect, especially one which has for its object the regulation of human conduct. Now, how prolix, and yet how incomplete and unavailing, such an attempt must have been, is proved by one notable example: "The Indoo and Mussulman religion are institutes

The *parables* of the New Testament are, many of them, such as would have done honour to any book in the world; I do not mean in style and diction, but in the choice of the subjects, in the structure of the narratives, in the aptness, propriety, and force of the circumstances woven into them; and in some, as that of the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, the Pharisee and the publican, in a union of pathos and simplicity, which, in the best productions of human genius, is the fruit only of a much exercised and well cultivated judgment.

The Lord's Prayer, for a succession of solemn thoughts, for fixing the attention upon a few great points, for suitableness to every condition, for sufficiency, for conciseness without obscurity, for the weight and real importance of its petitions, is without an equal or a rival.

From whence did these come? Whence had this man his wisdom? Was our Saviour, in fact, a well-instructed philosopher, whilst he is represented to us as an illiterate peasant? Or shall we say that some early Christians of taste and education composed these pieces and ascribed them to Christ? Beside all other incredibilities in this account, I answer, with Dr. Jortin, that they *could not* do it. No specimens of composition, which the Christians of the first century have left us, authorize us to believe that they were equal to the task. And how little qualified the Jews, the countrymen and companions of Christ, were to assist him in the undertaking, may be judged of from the traditions and writings of theirs which were the nearest to that age. The whole collection of the Talmud is one continued proof, into what follies they fell whenever they left their Bible; and how little capable they were of furnishing out such lessons as Christ delivered.

But there is still another view, in which our Lord's discourses deserve to be considered; and that is, in their *negative* character,—not in what they did, but in what they did not, contain. Under this head, the following reflections appear to me to possess some weight.

I. They exhibit no particular description of the invisible world. The future happiness of the good, and the misery of the bad, which is all we want to be assured of, is directly and positively affirmed, and is represented by metaphors and comparisons, which were plainly intended as metaphors and comparisons, and as nothing more. As to the rest, a solemn reserve is maintained. The question concerning the woman who had been married to seven brothers, "Whose shall she be on the resurrection?" was of a nature calculated to have drawn from Christ a more circumstantial account of the state of the human species in their future existence. He cut short, however, the inquiry, by an answer, which at once rebuked intruding curiosity, and was agreeable to the best apprehensions we are able to form upon the subject, viz. "That they who are accounted worthy of that resurrection, shall be as the angels of God in heaven." I lay a stress upon this reserve, because it repels the suspicion of enthusiasm: for enthusiasm is wont to expatiate upon the condition of the departed, above all other subjects; and with a wild particularity. It is moreover a topic which is always listened to with greediness. The teacher, therefore, whose principal purpose is to draw upon himself attention, is sure to be full of it. The Koran of Mahomet is half made up of it.

II. Our Lord enjoined no austerities. He not only enjoined none as absolute duties, but he recommended none as carrying men to a higher degree of divine favour. Place Christianity, in this respect, by the side of all institutions which have been founded in the fanaticism, either of their author, or of his first followers; or rather compare, in this respect, Christianity as it came from Christ, with the same religion after it fell into other hands; with the extravagant merit very soon ascribed to celibacy, solitude, voluntary poverty; with the rigours of an ascetic, and the vows of a monastic life; the hair shirt, the watchings, the midnight prayers, the obmutescence, the gloom and mortification of religious orders, and of those who aspired to religious perfection.

III. Our Saviour uttered no impassioned devotion. There was no heat in his piety, or in the language in which he expressed it; no vehement or rapturous ejaculations, no violent urgency, in his prayers. The Lord's Prayer is a model of calm devotion. His words in the garden are unaffected expressions, of a deep indeed, but sober, piety. He never appears to have been worked up into any thing like that elation, or that emotion of spirits which is occasionally observed in most of those, to whom the name of enthusiast can in any degree be applied. I feel a respect for Methodists, because I believe that there is to be found amongst them much sincere piety, and availing, though not always well-informed, Christianity: yet I never attended a meeting of theirs, but I came away with the reflection, how different what I heard was from what I read! I do not mean in doctrine, with which at present I have no concern, but in manner; how different from the calmness, the sobriety, the good sense, and I may add, the strength and authority of our Lord's discourses!

IV. It is very usual with the human mind, to substitute forwardness and fervency in a particular cause, for the merit of general and regular morality; and it is natural, and politic also, in the leader of a sect or party, to encourage such a disposition in his followers. Christ did not overlook this turn of thought; yet, though avowedly placing himself at the head of a new institution, he notices it only to condemn it. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto you I never knew you: depart from me, *ye that work iniquity.*"* So far was the author of Christianity from courting the attachment of his followers by any sacrifice of principle, or by a conde-

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of civil law, regulating the minutest questions both of property, and of all questions which come under the cognizance of the magistrate. And to what length details of this kind are necessarily carried, when once begun, may be understood from an anecdote of the Mussulman code, which we have received from the most respectable authority, that not less than *seventy-five thousand* traditional precepts have been promulgated."—Hamilton's Translation of Hedaya, or Guide.

* Matt. vii. 21, 22.

scension to the errors which even zeal in his service might have inspired! This was a proof both of sincerity and judgment.

V. Nor, fifthly, did he fall in with any of the depraved fashions of his country, or with the natural bias of his own education. Bred up a Jew, under a religion extremely technical, in an age and amongst a people more tenacious of the ceremonies than of any other part of that religion, he delivered an institution, containing less of ritual, and that more simple than is to be found in any religion which ever prevailed amongst mankind. We have known, I do allow, examples of an enthusiasm, which has swept away all external ordinances before it. But this spirit certainly did not dictate our Saviour's conduct, either in his treatment of the religion of his country, or in the formation of his own institution. In both, he displayed the soundness and moderation of his judgment. He censured an overstrained scrupulousness, or perhaps an affectation of scrupulousness, about the sabbath: but how did he censure it? not by contemning or decrying the institution itself, but by declaring that "the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath;" that is to say, that the sabbath was to be subordinate to its purpose, and that that purpose was the real good of those who were the subjects of the law. The same concerning the nicety of some of the Pharisees, in paying tithes of the most trifling articles, accompanied with a neglect of justice, fidelity, and mercy. He finds fault with them for misplacing their anxiety. He does not speak disrespectfully of the law of tithes, nor of their observance of it; but he assigns to each class of duties its proper station in the scale of moral importance. All this might be expected perhaps from a well-instructed, cool, and judicious philosopher, but was not to be looked for from an illiterate Jew; certainly not from an impetuous enthusiast.

VI. Nothing could be more quibbling, than were the comments and expositions of the Jewish doctors at that time; nothing so pucrile as their distinctions. Their evasion of the fifth commandment, their exposition of the law of oaths, are specimens of the bad taste in morals which then prevailed. Whereas, in a numerous collection of our Saviour's apophthegms, many of them referring to sundry precepts of the Jewish law, there is not to be found one example of sophistry, or of false subtilty, or of any thing approaching thereunto.

VII. The national temper of the Jews was intolerant, narrow-minded, and excluding. In Jesus, on the contrary, whether we regard his lessons or his example, we see not only benevolence, but benevolence the most enlarged and comprehensive. In the parable of the good Samaritan, the very point of the story is, that the person relieved by him, was the national and religious enemy of his benefactor. Our Lord declared the equity of the divine administration, when he told the Jews (what, probably, they were surprised to hear), "That many should come from the east and west, and should sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but that the children of the kingdom should be cast into outer darkness."* His reproof of the hasty zeal of his disciples, who would needs call down fire from heaven to revenge an affront put upon their Master, shows the lenity of his character, and of his religion; and his opinion of the manner in which the most unreasonable opponents ought to be treated, or at least of the manner in which they ought not to be treated. The terms in which his rebuke was conveyed, deserve to be noticed:—"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."*

VIII. Lastly, amongst the negative qualities of our religion, as it came out of the hands of its Founder and his apostles, we may reckon its complete abstraction from all views either of ecclesiastical or civil policy; or, to meet a language much in fashion with some men, from the politics either of priests or statesmen. Christ's declaration, that "his kingdom was not of this world," recorded by St. John; his evasion of the question, whether it was lawful or not to give tribute unto Cæsar, mentioned by the three other evangelists; his reply to an application that was made to him, to interpose his authority in a question of property; "Man, who made me a ruler or a judge over you?" ascribed to him by St. Luke; his declining to exercise the office of a criminal judge in the case of the woman taken in adultery, as related by John, are all intelligible significations of our Saviour's sentiments upon this head. And with respect to *politics*, in the usual sense of that word, or discussions concerning different forms of government, Christianity declines every question upon the subject. Whilst politicians are disputing about monarchies, aristocracies, and republics, the gospel is alike applicable, useful, and friendly, to them all; inasmuch as, 1st, it tends to make men virtuous, and as it is easier to govern good men than bad men under any constitution; as, 2dly, it states obedience to government in ordinary cases, to be not merely a submission to force, but a duty of conscience; as, 3dly, it induces dispositions favourable to public tranquillity, a Christian's chief care being to pass quietly through this world to a better; as, 4thly, it prays for communities, and for the governors of communities, of whatever description or denomination they be, with a solicitude and fervency proportioned to the influence which they possess upon human happiness. All which, in my opinion, is just as it should be. Had there been more to be found in Scripture of a political nature, or convertible to political purposes, the worst use would have been made of it, on whichever side it seemed to lie.

When, therefore, we consider Christ as a moral teacher (remembering that this was only a secondary part of his office; and that morality, by the nature of the subject, does not admit of discovery, properly so called);—when we consider either what he taught, or what he did not teach, either the substance or the manner of his instruction; his preference of solid to popular virtues, of a character which is commonly despised to a character which is universally extolled; his placing, in our licentious vices, the check in the right place, *viz.* upon the thoughts; his collecting of human duty into two well-devised rules, his repetition of these rules, the stress he laid upon them, especially in comparison with positive duties, and his fixing thereby the sentiments of his

* Matt. viii. 11.

* Luke ix. 55.

followers; his exclusion of all regard to reputation in our devotion and alms, and, by parity of reason, in our other virtues;—when we consider that his instructions were delivered in a form calculated for impression, the precise purpose in his situation to be consulted; and that they were illustrated by parables, the choice and structure of which would have been admired in any composition whatever;—when we observe him free from the usual symptoms of enthusiasm, heat and vehemence in devotion, austerity in institutions, and a wild particularity in the description of a future state; free also from the depravities of his age and country; without superstition amongst the most superstitious of men, yet not decrying positive distinctions or external observances, but soberly calling them to the principle of their establishment, and to their place in the scale of human duties; without sophistry or trifling, amidst teachers remarkable for nothing so much as frivolous subtilties and quibbling expositions; candid and liberal in his judgment of the rest of mankind, although belonging to a people who affected a separate claim to divine favour, and, in consequence of that opinion, prone to uncharitableness, partiality, and restriction:—when we find, in his religion, no scheme of building up a hierarchy, or of ministering to the views of human governments:—in a word, when we compare Christianity, as it came from its Author, either with other religions, or with itself in other hands, the most reluctant understanding will be induced to acknowledge the probity, I think also the good sense, of those to whom it owes its origin; and that some regard is due to the testimony of such men, when they declare their knowledge that the religion proceeded from God; and when they appeal, for the truth of their assertion, to miracles, which they wrought, or which they saw.

Perhaps the qualities which we observe in the religion, may be thought to prove something more. They would have been extraordinary, had the religion come from any person; from the person from whom it did come, they are exceedingly so. What was Jesus in external appearance? A Jewish peasant, the son of a carpenter, living with his father and mother in a remote province of Palestine, until the time that he produced himself in his public character. He had no master to instruct or prompt him; he had read no books, but the works of Moses and the prophets; he had visited no polished cities; he had received no lessons from Socrates or Plato,—nothing to form in him a taste or judgment different from that of the rest of his countrymen, and of persons of the same rank of life with himself. Supposing it to be true, which it is not, that all his points of morality might be picked out of Greek and Roman writings, they were writings which *he* had never seen. Supposing them to be no more than what some or other had taught in various times and places, he could not collect them together.

Who were his coadjutors in the undertaking,—the persons into whose hands the religion came after his death? A few fishermen upon the lake of Tiberias, persons just as uneducated, and, for the purpose of framing rules of morality, as unpromising as himself. Suppose the mission to be real, all this is accounted for; the unsuitableness of the authors to the production, of the characters to the undertaking, no longer surprises us: but without *reality*, it is very difficult to explain, how such a system should proceed from such persons. Christ was not like any other carpenter; the apostles were not like any other fishermen.

But the subject is not exhausted by these observations. That portion of it which is most reducible to points of argument, has been stated, and, I trust, truly. There are, however, some topics, of a more diffuse nature, which yet deserve to be proposed to the reader's attention.

The *character of Christ* is a part of the morality of the gospel: one strong observation upon which is, that, neither as represented by his followers, nor as attacked by his enemies, is he charged with any personal vice. This remark is as old as Origen: "Though innumerable lies and calumnies had been forged against the venerable Jesus, none had dared to charge him with an intemperance."* Not a reflection upon his moral character, not an imputation or suspicion of any offence against purity and chastity, appears for five hundred years after his birth. This faultlessness is more peculiar than we are apt to imagine. Some stain pollutes the morals or the morality of almost every other teacher, and of every other lawgiver.† Zeno the stoic, and Diogenes the cynic, fell into the foulest impurities; of which also Socrates himself was more than suspected. Solon forbade unnatural crimes to slaves. Lycurgus tolerated theft as a part of education. Plato recommended a community of women. Aristotle maintained the general right of making war upon barbarians. The elder Cato was remarkable for the ill usage of his slaves; the younger gave up the person of his wife. One loose principle is found in almost all the pagan moralists; is distinctly, however, perceived in the writings of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus; and that is, the allowing, and even the recommending to their disciples, a compliance with the religion, and with the religious rites, of every country into into which they came. In speaking of the founders of new institutions, we cannot forget Mahomet. His licentious transgressions of his own licentious rules; his abuse of the character which he assumed, and of the power which he had acquired, for the purposes of personal and privileged indulgence; his avowed claim of a special permission from heaven of unlimited sensuality, is known to every reader, as it is confessed by every writer, of the Moslem story.

Secondly, In the histories which are left us of Jesus Christ, although very short, and although dealing in narrative, and not in observation or panegyric, we perceive, beside the absence of every appearance of vice, traces of devotion, humility, benignity, mildness, patience, prudence. I speak of *traces* of those qualities, because the qualities themselves are to be collected from incidents; inasmuch as the terms are never used of Christ in the Gospels, nor is any formal character of him drawn in any part of the New Testament.

Thus we see the *devoutness* of his mind, in his frequent retirement to solitary prayer;‡ in his habitual giving of thanks;§ in his reference of the beauties and operations of nature to the bounty

* Or. Ep. Cels. l. 3. num. 36. ed. Bened.

† See many instances collected by Grotius, de Veritate Christianæ Religionis, in the notes to his second book, p. 116. Pocock's edition.

‡ Matt. xiv. 23. Luke ix. 28. Matt. xxvi. 36.

§ Matt. xi. 25. Mark viii. 6. John vi. 23. Luke xvii. 17.

of Providence;* in his earnest addresses to his Father, more particularly that short but solemn one before the raising of Lazarus from the dead;† and in the deep piety of his behaviour in the garden, on the last evening of his life:‡ his *humility*, in his constant reproof of contentions for superiority:§ the *benignity* and affectionateness of his temper, in his kindness to children;‖ in the tears which he shed over his falling country,¶ and upon the death of his friend;** in his noticing of the widow's mite;†† in his parables of the good Samaritan, of the ungrateful servant, and of the Pharisee and publican, of which parables no one but a man of humanity could have been the author: the *mildness* and lenity of his character is discovered, in his rebuke of the forward zeal of his disciples at the Samaritan village;‡‡ in his expostulation with Pilate;§§ in his prayer for his enemies at the moment of his suffering,‖‖ which, though it has been since very properly and frequently imitated, was then, I apprehend, new. His *prudence* is discerned, where prudence is most wanted, in his conduct on trying occasions, and in answers to artful questions. Of these, the following are examples:—His withdrawing, in various instances, from the first symptoms of tumult,¶¶ and with the express care, as appears from St. Matthew,*** of carrying on his ministry in quietness; his declining of every species of interference with the civil affairs of the country, which disposition is manifested by his behaviour in the case of the woman caught in adultery,††† and in his repulse of the application which was made to him, to interpose his decision about a disputed inheritance:‡‡‡ his judicious, yet, as it should seem, unprepared answers, will be confessed in the case of the Roman tribute;§§§ in the difficulty concerning the interfering relations of a future state, as proposed to him in the instance of a woman who had married seven brethren;‖‖‖ and, more especially, in his reply to those who demanded from him an explanation of the authority by which he acted, which reply consisted, in propounding a question to them, situated between the very difficulties into which they were insidiously endeavouring to draw *him*.¶¶¶

Our Saviour's lessons, besides what has already been remarked in them, touch, and that oftentimes by very affecting representations, upon some of the most interesting topics of human duty, and of human meditation: upon the principles, by which the decisions of the last day will be regulated:**** upon the superior, or rather the supreme, importance of religion:†††† upon penitence, by the most pressing calls, and the most encouraging invitations;‡‡‡‡ upon self-denial,§§§§ watchfulness,‖‖‖‖ placability,¶¶¶¶ confidence in God,***** the value of spiritual, that is, of mental worship,††††† the necessity of moral obedience, and the directing of that obedience to the spirit and principle of the law, instead of seeking for evasions in a technical construction of its terms.*

If we extend our argument to other parts of the New Testament, we may offer, as amongst the best and shortest rules of life, or, which is the same thing, descriptions of virtue, that have ever been delivered, the following passages:

"Pure religion, and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." †

"Now the end of the commandment is, charity, out of a pure heart and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned." ‡

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." §

Enumerations of virtues and vices, and those sufficiently accurate, and unquestionably just, are given by Saint Paul to his converts in three several Epistles. ‖

The relative duties of husbands and wives, of parents and children, of masters and servants, of Christian teachers and their flocks, of governors and their subjects, are set forth by the same writer, ¶ not indeed with the copiousness, the detail, or the distinctness, of a moralist, who should, in these days, sit down to write chapters upon the subject, but with the leading rules and principles in each; and, above all, with truth, and with authority.

Lastly, the whole volume of the New Testament is replete with *piety;* with, what were almost unknown to heathen moralists, *devotional virtues*, the most profound veneration of the Deity, an habitual sense of his bounty and protection, a firm confidence in the final result of his counsels and dispensations, a disposition to resort, upon all occasions, to his mercy, for the supply of human wants, for assistance in danger, for relief from pain, for the pardon of sin.

CHAPTER III.

The Candour of the Writers of the New Testament.

I MAKE this candour to consist, in their putting down many passages, and noticing many circumstances, which no writer whatever was likely to have forged; and which no writer would have chosen to appear in his book, who had been careful to present the story in the most unexceptionable form, or who had thought himself at liberty to carve and mould the particulars of that story, according to his choice, or according to his judgment of the effect.

A strong and well-known example of the fairness of the evangelists, offers itself in their account of Christ's resurrection, namely, in their unanimously stating, that after he was risen, he appeared to his disciples alone. I do not mean

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* Matt. vi. 26—28.
† John xi. 41.
‡ Matt. xxvi. 36—47.
§ Mark ix. 33.
‖ Mark x. 16.
¶ Luke xix. 41.
** John xi. 35.
†† Mark xii. 42.
‡‡ Luke ix. 55.
§§ John xix. 11.
‖‖ Luke xxiii. 34.
¶¶ Matt. xiv. 22. Luke v. 15, 16. John v. 13; vi. 15.
*** Chap. xii. 19.
††† John viii. 1.
‡‡‡ Luke xii. 14.
§§§ Matt. xxii. 19.
‖‖‖ Matt. xxii. 28.
¶¶¶ Matt. xxi. 23, &c.
**** Matt. xxv. 31, &c.
†††† Mark viii. 35. Matt. vi. 31—33. Luke xii. 4, 5. 16—21.
‡‡‡‡ Luke xv.
§§§§ Matt. v. 29.
‖‖‖‖ Mark xiii. 37. Matt. xxiv. 42.—xxv. 13.
¶¶¶¶ Luke xvii. 4. Matt. xviii. 33, &c.
***** Matt. vi. 25—30.
††††† John iv. 23, 24.

* Matt. v. 21.
† James i. 27.
‡ 1 Tim. i. 5.
§ Tit. ii. 11, 12.
‖ Gal. v. 19. Col. iii. 12. 1 Cor. xiii.
¶ Ephes. v. 33; vi. 1. 5. 2 Cor. vi. 6, 7. Rom. xiii. 9.

that they have used the exclusive word *alone;* but that all the instances which they have recorded of his appearance, are instances of appearance to his disciples; that their reasonings upon it, and allusions to it, are confined to this supposition; and that, by one of them, Peter is made to say, "Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." * The most common understanding must have perceived, that the history of the resurrection would have come with more advantage, if they had related that Jesus appeared, after he was risen, to his foes as well as his friends, to the Scribes and Pharisees, the Jewish council, and the Roman governor; or even if they had asserted the public appearance of Christ in general unqualified terms, without noticing, as they have done, the presence of his disciples on each occasion, and noticing it in such a manner as to lead their readers to suppose that none but disciples were present. They *could* have represented it in one way as well as the other. And if their point had been, to have the religion believed, whether true or false; if they had fabricated the story *ab initio;* or if they had been disposed either to have delivered their testimony as witnesses, or to have worked up their materials and information as historians, in such a manner as to render their narrative as specious and unobjectionable as they could; in a word, if they had thought of any thing but of the truth of the case, as they understood and believed it; they would, in their account of Christ's several appearances after his resurrection, at least have omitted this restriction. At this distance of time, the account as we have it, is perhaps more credible than it would have been the other way; because this manifestation of the historians' candour, is of more advantage to their testimony, than the difference in the circumstances of the account would have been to the nature of the evidence. But this is an effect which the evangelists would not foresee: and I think that it was by no means the case at the time when the books were composed.

Mr. Gibbon has argued for the genuineness of the Koran, from the confessions which it contains to the apparent disadvantage of the Mahometan cause. † The same defence vindicates the genuineness of our Gospels, and without prejudice to the cause at all.

There are some other instances in which the evangelists honestly relate what, they must have perceived, would make against them.

Of this kind is John the Baptist's message, preserved by Saint Matthew, (xi. 2,) and Saint Luke (vii. 18): "Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" To confess, still more to state, that John the Baptist had his doubts concerning the character of Jesus, could not but afford a handle to cavil and objection. But truth, like honesty, neglects appearances. The same observation, perhaps, holds concerning the apostacy of Judas. ‡

John vi. 66. "From that time, many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Was it the part of a writer, who dealt in suppression and disguise, to put down *this* anecdote?

Or this, which Matthew has preserved? (xii. 58:) "He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief."

Again, in the same evangelist: (v. 17, 18:) "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil: for, verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." At the time the Gospels were written, the apparent tendency of Christ's mission was to diminish the authority of the Mosaic code, and it was so considered by the Jews themselves. It is very improbable, therefore, that without the constraint of truth, Matthew should have ascribed a saying to Christ, which, *primo intuitu*, militated with the judgment of the age in which his Gospel was written. Marcion thought this text so objectionable that he altered the words, so as to invert the sense. ¶

Once more: (Acts xxv. 18, 19:) "They brought none accusation against him, of such things as I supposed, but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Nothing could be more in the character of a Roman governor than these words. But that is not precisely the point I am concerned with. A mere panegyrist, or a dishonest narrator, would not have represented his cause, or have made a great magistrate represent it, in this manner; *i. e.* in terms not a little disparaging, and bespeaking, on his part, much unconcern and indifference about the matter. The same observation may be repeated of the speech which is ascribed to Gallio, (Acts xviii. 15,) "If it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters."

Lastly, where do we discern a stronger mark of candour, or less disposition to extol and magnify, than in the conclusion of the same history? in which the evangelist, after relating that Paul, on his first arrival at Rome, preached to the Jews from morning until evening, adds, "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not."

The following, I think, are passages which were very unlikely to have presented themselves to the mind of a forger or a fabulist.

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* Acts x. 40, 41. † Vol. ix. c. 50. note 96.

‡ I had once placed amongst these examples of fair concession, the remarkable words of Saint Matthew, in his account of Christ's appearance upon the Galilean mountain: "And when they saw him, they worshipped him; *but some doubted.*" ‡ I have since, however, been convinced by what is observed concerning this passage in Dr. Townshend's discourse § upon the resurrection, that the transaction, as related by Saint Matthew, was really this: "Christ appeared first *at a distance;* the greater part of the company, the moment they saw him, worshipped, but some, as yet, *i. e.* upon the first distant view of his person, doubted; whereupon Christ *came up* ‖ to them, and spake to them," &c.: that the doubt, therefore, was a doubt only at first, for a moment, and upon his being seen at a distance, and was afterward dispelled by his nearer approach, and by his entering into conversation with them.

‡ Chap. xxviii. 17. § Page 177.

‖ Saint Matthew's words are, Και προσελθων ο Ιησους, ελαλησεν αυτοις. This intimates, that, when he first appeared, it was at a distance, at least from many of the spectators.—Ib. p. 197.

¶ Lardner, Cred. vol. xv. p. 422.

Matt. xxi. 21. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done unto the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done; all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, it shall be done."* It appears to me very improbable that these words should have been put into Christ's mouth, if he had not actually spoken them. The term "faith," as here used, is perhaps rightly interpreted of confidence in that internal notice, by which the apostles were admonished of their power to perform any particular miracle. And this exposition renders the sense of the text more easy. But the words, undoubtedly, in their obvious construction, carry with them a difficulty, which no writer would have brought upon himself officiously.

Luke ix. 59. "And he said unto another, Follow me: but he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."† This answer, though very expressive of the transcendent importance of religious concerns, was apparently harsh and repulsive; and such as would not have been made for Christ, if he had not really used it. At least some other instance would have been chosen.

The following passage, I, for the same reason, think impossible to have been the production of artifice, or of a cold forgery:—"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire (Gehennæ)." Matt. v. 22. It is emphatic, cogent, and well calculated for the purpose of impression; but is inconsistent with the supposition of art or wariness on the part of the relater.

The short reply of our Lord to Mary Magdalen, after his resurrection, (John xx. 16, 17,) "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my Father," in my opinion, must have been founded in a reference or allusion to some prior conversation, for the want of knowing which, his meaning is hidden from us. This very obscurity, however, is a proof of genuineness. No one would have forged such an answer.

John vi. The whole of the conversation recorded in this chapter, is, in the highest degree, unlikely to be fabricated, especially the part of our Saviour's reply, between the fiftieth and the fifty-eighth verse. I need only put down the first sentence: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Without calling in question the expositions that have been given of this passage, we may be permitted to say, that it labours under an obscurity, in which it is impossible to believe that any one, who made speeches for the persons of his narrative, would have voluntarily involved them. That this discourse was obscure, even at the time, is confessed by the writer who had preserved it, when he tells us, at the conclusion, that many of our Lord's disciples, when they had heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can bear it?"

Christ's taking of a young child, and placing it in the midst of his contentious disciples, (Matt. xviii. 2,) though as decisive a proof as any could be, of the benignity of his temper, and very expressive of the character of the religion which he wished to inculcate, was not by any means an obvious thought. Nor am I acquainted with any thing in any ancient writing which resembles it.

The account of the institution of the eucharist bears strong internal marks of genuineness. If it had been feigned, it would have been more full; it would have come nearer to the actual mode of celebrating the rite, as that mode obtained very early in Christian churches; and it would have been more formal than it is. In the forged piece, called the Apostolic Constitutions, the apostles are made to enjoin many parts of the ritual which was in use in the second and third centuries, with as much particularity as a modern rubric could have done. Whereas, in the History of the Lord's supper, as we read it in Saint Matthew's Gospel, there is not so much as the command to repeat it. This, surely, looks like undesignedness. I think also that the difficulty arising from the conciseness of Christ's expression, "This is my body," would have been avoided in a made-up story. I allow that the explication of these words, given by protestants, is satisfactory; but it is deduced from a diligent comparison of the words in question with forms of expression used in Scripture, and especially by Christ upon other occasions. No writer would arbitrarily and unnecessarily have thus cast in his reader's way a difficulty, which, to say the least, it required research and erudition to clear up.

Now it ought to be observed, that the argument which is built upon these examples, extends both to the authenticity of the books and to the truth of the narrative: for it is improbable that the forger of a history in the name of another should have inserted such passages into it: and it is improbable also, that the persons whose names the books bear should have fabricated such passages; or even have allowed them a place in their work, if they had not believed them to express the truth.

The following observation, therefore, of Dr. Lardner, the most candid of all advocates, and the most cautious of all inquirers, seems to be well-founded:—"Christians are induced to believe the writers of the Gospel, by observing the evidences of piety and probity that appear in their writings, in which there is no deceit, or artifice, or cunning, or design." "No remarks," as Dr. Beattie hath properly said, "are thrown in, to anticipate objections; nothing of that caution which never fails to distinguish the testimony of those who are conscious of imposture; no endeavour to reconcile the reader's mind to what may be extraordinary in the narrative."

I beg leave to cite also another author,* who has well expressed the reflection which the examples now brought forward were intended to suggest. "It doth not appear that ever it came into the mind of these writers, to consider how this or the other action would appear to mankind, or what objections might be raised upon them.

* See also chap. xvii. 20. Luke xvii. 6.
† See also Matt. viii. 21.

* Duchal, p. 97, 98.

But without at all attending to this, they lay the facts before you, at no pains to think whether they would appear credible or not. If the reader will not believe their testimony, there is no help for it: they tell the truth, and attend to nothing else. Surely this looks like sincerity, and that they published nothing to the world but what they believed themselves."

As no improper supplement to this chapter, I crave a place here for observing the extreme *naturalness* of some of the things related in the New Testament.

Mark ix. 23. "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." This struggle in the father's heart, between solicitude for the preservation of his child, and a kind of involuntary distrust of Christ's power to heal him, is here expressed with an air of reality, which could hardly be counterfeited.

Again, (Matt. xxi. 9,) the eagerness of the people to introduce Christ into Jerusalem, and their demand, a short time afterward, of his crucifixion, when he did not turn out what they expected him to be, so far from affording matter of objection, represents popular favour in exact agreement with nature and with experience, as the flux and reflux of a wave.

The rulers and Pharisees rejecting Christ, whilst many of the common people received him, was the effect which, in the then state of Jewish prejudices, I should have expected. And the reason with which they who rejected Christ's mission kept themselves in countenance, and with which also they answered the arguments of those who favoured it, is precisely the reason which such men usually give:—"Have any of the scribes or Pharisees believed on him?"—John vii. 48.

In our Lord's conversation at the well, (John iv. 29,) Christ had surprised the Samaritan woman with an allusion to a single particular in her domestic situation, "Thou hast had five husbands; and he, whom thou now hast, is not thy husband." The woman, soon after this, ran back to the city, and called out to her neighbours, "Come, see a man which told me *all things* that ever I did." This exaggeration appears to me very natural; especially in the hurried state of spirits into which the woman may be supposed to have been thrown.

The lawyer's subtilty in running a distinction upon the word neighbour, in the precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," was no less natural, than our Saviour's answer was decisive and satisfactory.—Luke x. 29. The lawyer of the New Testament, it must be observed, was a Jewish divine.

The behaviour of Gallio (Acts xviii. 12—17), and of Festus (xxv. 18, 19), have been observed upon already.

The consistency of St. Paul's character throughout the whole of his history (*viz.* the warmth and activity of his zeal, first against, and then for, Christianity), carries with it very much of the appearance of truth.

There are also some *properties*, as they may be called, observable in the Gospels: that is, circumstances separately suiting with the situation, character, and intention, of their respective authors.

St. Matthew, who was an inhabitant of Galilee, and did not join Christ's society until some time after Christ had come into Galilee to preach, has given us very little of his history prior to that period. Saint John, who had been converted before, and who wrote to supply omissions in the other Gospels, relates some remarkable particulars, which had taken place before Christ left Judea, to go into Galilee.*

Saint Matthew (xv. 1) has recorded the cavil of the Pharisees against the disciples of Jesus, for eating "with unclean hands." St. Mark has also (vii. 1) recorded the same transaction (taken probably from St. Matthew), but with this addition; "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands often, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders: and when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not: and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." Now Saint Matthew was not only a Jew himself, but it is evident, from the whole structure of his Gospel, especially from his numerous references to the Old Testament, that he wrote for Jewish readers. The above explanation, therefore, in him, would have been unnatural, as not being wanted by the readers whom he addressed. But in Mark, who, whatever use he might make of Matthew's Gospel, intended his own narrative for a general circulation, and who himself travelled to distant countries in the service of the religion, it was properly added.

CHAPTER IV.

Identity of Christ's Character.

The argument expressed by this title, I apply principally to the comparison of the first three Gospels with that of Saint John. It is known to every reader of Scripture, that the passages of Christ's history, preserved by Saint John, are, except his passion and resurrection, for the most part, different from those which are delivered by the other evangelists. And I think the ancient account of this difference to be the true one, *viz.* that Saint John wrote *after* the rest, and to supply what he thought omissions in their narratives, of which the principal were our Saviour's conferences with the Jews of Jerusalem, and his discourses to his apostles at his last supper. But what I observe in the comparison of these several accounts is, that, although actions and discourses are ascribed to Christ by Saint John, in general different from what are given to him by the other evangelists, yet, under this diversity, there is a similitude of *manner*, which indicates that the actions and discourses proceeded from the same person. I should have laid little stress upon the repetition of actions substantially alike, or of discourses containing many of the same expressions, because that is a species of resemblance, which would either belong to a true history, or might easily be imitated in a false one. Nor do I deny, that a dramatic writer is able to sustain propriety and distinction of character, through a great variety of separate incidents and situations. But the evangelists were

* Hartley's Observations, vol. ii. p. 103.

not dramatic writers; nor possessed the talents of dramatic writers; nor will it, I believe, be suspected, that they *studied* uniformity of character, or ever thought of any such thing, in the person who was the subject of their histories. Such uniformity, if it exists, is on their part casual; and if there be, as I contend there is, a perceptible resemblance of *manner*, in passages, and between discourses, which are in themselves extremely distinct, and are delivered by historians writing without any imitation of, or reference to, one another, it affords a just presumption, that these are, what they profess to be, the actions and the discourses of the same real person; that the evangelists wrote from fact, and not from imagination.

The article in which I find this agreement most strong, is in our Saviour's mode of teaching, and in that particular property of it, which consists in his drawing of his doctrine from the occasion; or, which is nearly the same thing, raising reflections from the objects and incidents before him, or turning a particular discourse then passing, into an opportunity of general instruction.

It will be my business to point out this *manner* in the first three evangelists; and then to inquire, whether it do not appear also, in several examples of Christ's discourses, preserved by Saint John.

The reader will observe in the following quotations, that the Italic letter contains the reflection; the common letter, the incident or occasion from which it springs.

Matt. xii. 47—50. "Then they said unto him. Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren: *for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*"

Matt. xvi. 5. "And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread; then Jesus said unto them, *Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.* And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread.—How is it that ye do not understand, that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees? Then understood they, *how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the* DOCTRINE *of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*"

Matt. xv. 1, 2, 10, 11, 15—20. "Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the traditions of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.——And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear and understand: *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.*——Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? but those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man: *for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man:* BUT TO EAT WITH UNWASHEN HANDS DEFILETH NOT A MAN." Our Saviour, on this occasion, expatiates rather more at large than usual, and his discourse also is more divided: but the concluding sentence brings back the whole train of thought to the incident in the first verse, *viz.* the objugatory question of the Pharisees, and renders it evident that the whole sprang from that circumstance.

Mark x. 13—15. "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them: but when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; *for of such is the kingdom of God: verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*"

Mark i. 16, 17. "Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers: and Jesus said unto them, *Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men.*"

Luke xi. 27. "And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked: but he said, *Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.*"

Luke xiii. 1—3. "There were present at that season, some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices; and Jesus answering, said unto them, *Suppose ye, that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*"

Luke xiv. 15. "And when one of them that sat at meat with him, heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Then said he unto him, *A certain man made a great supper, and bade many,* &c. The parable is rather too long for insertion, but affords a striking instance of Christ's *manner* of raising a discourse from the occasion. Observe also in the same chapter two other examples of advice, drawn from the circumstances of the entertainment and the behaviour of the guests.

We will now see, how this *manner* discovers itself in *St. John's* history of Christ.

John vi. 25. "And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? Jesus answered them, and said, Verily I say unto you, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you.*"

John iv. 12. "Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered, and said unto her (the woman of Samaria,) Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but *whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.*"

John iv. 31. "In the mean while, his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat; but he said unto

them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him aught to eat? Jesus saith unto them, *My meat is, to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*"

John ix. 1—5. "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth; and his disciples asked him, saying, Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*"

John ix. 35—40. "Jesus heard that they had cast him (the blind man above-mentioned) out: and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? And he answered, and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe; and he worshipped him. And Jesus said, *For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not, might see; and that they which see, might be made blind.*"

All that the reader has now to do, is to compare the series of examples taken from Saint John, with the series of examples taken from the other evangelists, and to judge whether there be not a visible agreement of *manner* between them. In the above-quoted passages, the occasion is stated, as well as the reflection. They seem, therefore, the most proper for the purpose of our argument. A large, however, and curious collection has been made by different writers,* of instances, in which it is extremely probable that Christ spoke in allusion to some object, or some occasion, then before him, though the mention of the occasion, or of the object, be omitted in the history. I only observe, that these instances are common to Saint John's Gospel with the other three.

I conclude this article by remarking, that nothing of this *manner* is perceptible in the speeches recorded in the Acts, or in any other but those which are attributed to Christ, and that, in truth, it was a very unlikely manner for a forger or fabulist to attempt; and a manner very difficult for any writer to execute, if he had to supply all the materials, both the incidents and the observations upon them, out of his own head. A forger or a fabulist would have made for Christ, discourses exhorting to virtue and dissuading from vice in general terms. It would never have entered into the thoughts of either, to have crowded together such a number of allusions to time, place, and other little circumstances, as occur, for instance, in the sermon on the mount, and which nothing but the actual presence of the objects could have suggested."†

II. There appears to me to exist an affinity between the history of Christ's placing a little child in the midst of his disciples, as related by the first three evangelists,‡ and the history of Christ's washing his disciples' feet, as given by Saint John.§ In the stories themselves there is no resemblance. But the affinity which I would point out consists in these two articles: First, that both stories denote the emulation which prevailed amongst Christ's disciples, and his own care and desire to correct it; the moral of both is the same. Secondly, that both stories are specimens of the same manner of teaching, *viz.* by action; a mode of emblematic instruction extremely peculiar, and, in these passages, ascribed, we see, to our Saviour, by the first three evangelists, and by Saint John in instances totally unlike, and without the smallest suspicion of their borrowing from each other.

III. A singularity in Christ's language, which runs through all the evangelists, and which is found in those discourses of Saint John that have nothing similar to them in the other Gospels, is the appellation of "the Son of man;" and it is in all the evangelists found under the peculiar circumstance of being applied by Christ to himself, but of never being used of him, or towards him, by any other person. It occurs seventeen times in Matthew's Gospel, twenty times in Mark's, twenty-one times in Luke's, and eleven times in John's, and always with this restriction.

IV. A point of agreement in the conduct of Christ, as represented by his different historians, is that of his withdrawing himself out of the way, whenever the behaviour of the multitude indicated a disposition to tumult.

Matt. xiv. 22. "And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitude away. And when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray."

Luke v. 15, 16. "But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him, and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities: and he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed."

With these quotations, compare the following from Saint John:

Chap. v. 13. "And he that was healed wist not who it was; for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place."

Chap. vi. 15. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone."

In this last instance, Saint John gives the motive of Christ's conduct, which is left unexplained by the other evangelists, who have related the conduct itself.

V. Another, and a more singular circumstance in Christ's ministry, was the reserve, which, for some time, and upon some occasions at least, he used in declaring his own character, and his leaving it to be collected from his works rather than his professions. Just reasons for this reserve have been assigned.* But it is not what one would have expected. We meet with it in Saint Matthew's Gospel: chap. xvi. 20. "Then charged he his disciples, that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." Again, and upon a different occasion, in Saint Mark's: chap. iii. 11. "And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God: and he straightly charged them that they should not make him known." Another instance similar to this last is recorded by Saint

* Newton on Daniel, p. 148, note *a*. Jortin, Dis. p. 213. Bishop Law's Life of Christ.

† See Bishop Law's Life of Christ.

‡ Matt. xviii. 1. Mark ix. 33. Luke ix. 46.

§ Chap. xiii. 3.

* See Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity.

Luke, chap. iv. 41. What we thus find in the three evangelists, appears also in a passage of Saint John, chap. x. 24, 25. "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." The occasion here was different from any of the rest; and it was indirect. We only discover Christ's conduct through the upbraidings of his adversaries. But all this strengthens the argument. I had rather at any time surprise a coincidence in some oblique allusion, than read it in broad assertions.

VI. In our Lord's commerce with his disciples, one very observable particular is the difficulty which they found in understanding him, when he spoke to them of the future part of his history, especially of what related to his passion or resurrection. This difficulty produced, as was natural, a wish in them to ask for farther explanation; from which, however, they appear to have been sometimes kept back, by the fear of giving offence. All these circumstances are distinctly noticed by Mark and Luke upon the occasion of his informing them, (probably for the first time,) that the Son of man should be delivered into the hands of men. "They understood not," the evangelists tell us, "this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying." Luke ix. 45. Mark ix. 32. In St. John's Gospel we have, on a different occasion, and in a different instance, the same difficulty of apprehension, the same curiosity, and the same restraint:—"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me; because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us? A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, A little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them," &c. John xvi. 16, &c.

VII. The meekness of Christ during his last sufferings, which is conspicuous in the narratives of the first three evangelists, is preserved in that of Saint John under separate examples. The answer given by him, in Saint John,* when the high priest asked him of his disciples and his doctrine; "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing; why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them;" is very much of a piece with his reply to the armed party which seized him, as we read in Saint Mark's Gospel, and in Saint Luke's:† "Are you come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not." In both answers, we discern the same tranquillity, the same reference to his public teaching. His mild expostulation with Pilate, on two several occasions, as related by Saint John,‡ is delivered with the same unruffled temper, as that which conducted him through the last scene of his life, as described by his other evangelists. His answer in Saint John's Gospel, to the officer who struck him with the palm of his hand, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?"* was such an answer, as might have been looked for from the person, who, as he proceeded to the place of execution, bid his companions, (as we are told by Saint Luke,)† weep not for him, but for themselves, their posterity, and their country; and who, whilst he was suspended upon the cross, prayed for his murderers, "for they know not," said he, "what they do." The urgency also of his judges and his prosecutors to extort from him a defence to the accusation, and his unwillingness to make any, (which was a peculiar circumstance,) appears in Saint John's account, as well as in that of the other evangelists.‡

There are moreover two other correspondencies between Saint John's history of the transaction and theirs, of a kind somewhat different from those which we have been now mentioning.

The first three evangelists record what is called our Saviour's agony, *i. e.* his devotion in the garden immediately before he was apprehended; in which narrative they all make him pray, "that the cup might pass from him." This is the particular metaphor which they all ascribe to him. Saint Matthew adds, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done."§ Now Saint John does not give the scene in the garden: but when Jesus was seized, and some resistance was attempted to be made by Peter, Jesus, according to his account, checked the attempt with this reply: "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"‖ This is something more than consistency; it is coincidence: because it is extremely natural, that Jesus, who, before he was apprehended, had been praying his Father, that "that cup might pass from him," yet with such a pious retraction of his request, as to have added, "If this cup may not pass from me, thy will be done;" it was natural, I say, for the same person, when he actually was apprehended, to express the resignation to which he had already made up his thoughts, and to express it in the form of speech which he had before used, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This is a coincidence between writers, in whose narratives there is no imitation, but great diversity.

A second similar correspondency is the following: Matthew and Mark make the charge upon which our Lord was condemned, to be a threat of destroying the temple; "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands:"¶ but they neither of them inform us, upon what circumstances this calumny was founded. Saint John, in the early part of the history,** supplies us with this information; for he relates, that, on our Lord's first journey to Jerusalem, when the Jews asked him, "What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? he answered, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This agreement could hardly arise from any thing but the truth of the case. From any care or design in Saint John, to make his narrative tally with the narratives of other evangelists, it certainly did not arise, for no such design appears, but the absence of it.

* Chap. xviii. 20, 21. † Mark xiv. 48. Luke xxii. 52. ‡ Chap. xviii. 34; xix. 11.

* Chap. xviii. 23. † Chap. xxiii. 28.
‡ See John xix. 9. Matt. xxvii. 14. Luke xxiii. 9.
§ Chap. xxvi. 42. ‖ Chap. xviii. 11.
¶ Mark xiv. 58. ** Chap. ii. 19.

A strong and more general instance of agreement is the following:—The first three evangelists have related the appointment of the twelve apostles,* and have given a catalogue of their names in form. John, without ever mentioning the appointment, or giving the catalogue, supposes throughout his whole narrative, Christ to be accompanied by a select party of his disciples; the number of those to be twelve;† and whenever he happens to notice any one as of that number,‡ it is one included in the catalogue of the other evangelists: and the names principally occurring in the course of *his* history of Christ, are the names extant in their list. This last agreement, which is of considerable moment, runs through every Gospel, and through every chapter of each.

All this bespeaks reality.

CHAPTER V.

Originality of our Saviour's Character.

The Jews, whether right or wrong, had understood their prophecies to foretell the advent of a person, who by some supernatural assistance should advance their nation to independence, and to a supreme degree of splendour and prosperity. This was the reigning opinion and expectation of the times.

Now, had Jesus been an enthusiast, it is probable that his enthusiasm would have fallen in with the popular delusion, and that, whilst he gave himself out to be the person intended by these predictions, he would have assumed the character to which they were universally supposed to relate.

Had he been an impostor, it was his business to have flattered the prevailing hopes, because these hopes were to be the instruments of his attraction and success.

But, what is better than conjecture, is the fact, that all the pretended Messiahs actually did so. We learn from Josephus, that there were many of these. Some of them, it is probable, might be impostors, who thought that an advantage was to be taken of the state of public opinion. Others, perhaps, were enthusiasts, whose imagination had been drawn to this particular object, by the language and sentiments which prevailed around them. But, whether impostors or enthusiasts, they concurred in producing themselves in the character which their countrymen looked for, that is to say, as the restorers and deliverers of the nation, in that sense in which restoration and deliverance were expected by the Jews.

Why therefore Jesus, if he was, like them, either an enthusiast or impostor, did not pursue the same conduct as they did, in framing his character and pretensions, it will be found difficult to explain. A mission, the operation and benefit of which was to take place in another life, was a thing unthought of as the subject of these prophecies. That Jesus, coming to them as their Messiah, should come under a character totally different from that in which they expected him; should deviate from the general persuasion, and deviate into pretensions absolutely singular and original; appears to be inconsistent with the imputation of enthusiasm or imposture, both which, by their nature, I should expect would, and both which, throughout the experience which this very subject furnishes, in fact *have*, followed the opinions that obtained at the time.

If it be said, that Jesus, having tried the other plan, turned at length, to this; I answer, that the thing is said without evidence; against evidence; that it was competent to the rest to have done the same, yet that nothing of this sort was thought of by any.

* Matt. x. 1. Mark iii. 14. Luke vi. 12.
† Chap. vi. 70. ‡ Chap. xx. 24; vi. 71.

CHAPTER VI.

One argument, which has been much relied upon (but not more than its just weight deserves,) is the conformity of the facts occasionally mentioned or referred to in Scripture, with the state of things in those times, as represented by foreign and independent accounts; which conformity proves, that the writers of the New Testament possessed a species of local knowledge, which could only belong to an inhabitant of that country, and to one living in that age. This argument, if well made out by examples, is very little short of proving the absolute genuineness of the writings. It carries them up to the age of the reputed authors, to an age in which it must have been difficult to impose upon the Christian public, forgeries in the names of those authors, and in which there is no evidence that any forgeries were attempted. It proves, at least, that the books, whoever were the authors of them, were composed by persons living in the time and country in which these things were transacted; and consequently capable, by their situation, of being well informed of the facts which they relate. And the argument is stronger when applied to the New Testament, than it is in the case of almost any other writings, by reason of the mixed nature of the allusions which this book contains. The scene of action is not confined to a single country, but displayed in the greatest cities of the Roman empire. Allusions are made to the manners and principles of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews. This variety renders a forgery proportionably more difficult, especially to writers of a posterior age. A Greek or Roman Christian, who lived in the second or third century, would have been wanting in Jewish literature; a Jewish convert in those ages would have been equally deficient in the knowledge of Greece and Rome.*

This, however, is an argument which depends entirely upon an induction of particulars; and as, consequently, it carries with it little force, without a view of the instances upon which it is built, I have to request the reader's attention to a detail of examples, distinctly and articulately proposed. In collecting these examples, I have done no more than epitomize the first volume of the first part of Dr. Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History. And I have brought the argument within its present compass, first by passing over some of his sections in which the accordancy appeared to me less certain, or upon subjects not sufficiently appropriate or circumstantial; secondly, by contracting every section into the fewest words possible, contenting myself for the most

* Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament (Marsh's Translation,) c. 2. sect. xi.

part with a mere *apposition* of passages; and, thirdly, by omitting many disquisitions, which, though learned and accurate, are not absolutely necessary to the understanding or verification of the argument.

The writer principally made use of in the inquiry, is Josephus. Josephus was born at Jerusalem four years after Christ's ascension. He wrote his history of the Jewish war some time after the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened in the year of our Lord LXX, that is, thirty-seven years after the ascension; and his history of the Jews he finished in the year XCIII, that is, sixty years after the ascension.

At the head of each article, I have referred, by figures included in brackets, to the page of Dr. Lardner's volume, where the section, from which the abridgment is made, begins. The edition used, is that of 1741.

I. [p. 14.] Matt. ii. 22. "When he (Joseph) heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee."

In this passage it is asserted, that Archelaus succeeded Herod in Judea; and it is implied, that his power did *not* extend to Galilee. Now we learn from Josephus, that Herod the Great, whose dominion included all the land of Israel, appointed Archelaus his successor in *Judea*, and assigned the *rest* of his dominions to other sons; and that this disposition was ratified, as to the main parts of it, by the Roman emperor. *

Saint Matthew says, that Archelaus *reigned*, was *king* in Judea. Agreeably to this, we are informed by Josephus, not only that Herod appointed Archelaus his successor in Judea, but that he also appointed him with the title of King; and the Greek verb βασιλευει, which the evangelist uses to denote the government and rank of Archelaus, is used likewise by Josephus. †

The cruelty of Archelaus's character, which is not obscurely intimated by the evangelist, agrees with divers particulars in his history, preserved by Josephus:—"In the tenth year of his government, the chief of the Jews and Samaritans, not being able to endure his cruelty and tyranny, presented complaints against him to Cæsar." ‡

II. [p. 19.] Luke iii. 1. "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar,—Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip, tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis,—the word of God came unto John."

By the will of Herod the Great, and the decree of Augustus thereupon, his two sons were appointed, one (Herod Antipas) tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa, and the other (Philip) tetrarch of Trachonitis and the neighbouring countries. ‖ We have therefore these two persons in the situations in which Saint Luke places them; and also, that they were in these situations in the *fifteenth* year of Tiberius; in other words, that they continued in possession of their territories and titles until that time, and afterward, appears from a passage of Josephus, which relates of Herod, "that he was *removed* by Caligula, the successor of Tiberius;* and of Philip, that he died in the *twentieth* year of Tiberius, when he had governed Trachonitis and Batanea and Gaulanitis thirty seven years." †

III. [p. 20.] Mark vi. 17. ‡ "Herod had sent forth, and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison, for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her."

With this compare Joseph. Antiq. l. xviii. c. 6. sect. 1.—"He (Herod the tetrarch) made a visit to Herod his brother.—Here, falling in love with Herodias, the wife of the said Herod, he ventured to make her proposals of marriage. §

Again, Mark vi. 22. "And when the *daughter of the said Herodias* came in and danced——."

With this also compare Joseph. Antiq. l. xviii. c. 6. sect. 4. "Herodias was married to Herod, son of Herod the Great. *They had a daughter*, whose name was Salome; after whose birth, Herodias, in utter violation of the laws of her country, left her husband, then living, and married Herod the tetrarch of Galilee, her husband's brother by the father's side."

IV. [p. 29.] Acts xii. 1. "Now, about that time, *Herod the king* stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church." In the conclusion of the same chapter, Herod's *death* is represented to have taken place soon after this persecution. The accuracy of our historian, or, rather, the unmeditated coincidence, which truth of its own accord produces, is in this instance remarkable. There was no portion of time, for thirty years before, nor *ever* afterward, in which there was a *king* at Jerusalem, a person exercising that authority in Judea, or to whom that title could be applied, except the three last years of this Herod's life, within which period the transaction recorded in the Acts is stated to have taken place. This prince was the grandson of Herod the Great. In the Acts, he appears under his family-name of Herod; by Josephus he was called Agrippa. For proof that he was a *king*, properly so called, we have the testimony of Josephus in full and direct terms:—"Sending for him to his palace, Caligula put a crown upon his head, and appointed him king of the tetrarchie of Philip, intending also to give him the tetrarchie of Lysanias." ‖ And that Judea was at last, but not until the last, included in his dominions, appears by a subsequent passage of the same Josephus, wherein he tells us, that Claudius, by a decree, confirmed to Agrippa the dominion which Caligula had given him; *adding also Judea and Samaria, in the utmost extent, as possessed by his grandfather Herod.* ¶

* Ant. lib. xvii. c. 8. sect. 1.
† De Bell. lib. i. c. 33. sect. 7.
‡ Ant. lib. xvii. c. 13. sect 1.
‖ Ant. lib. xvii. c. 8. sect. 1

* Ant. lib. xviii. c. 8. sect. 2. † Ibid. c. 5. sect. 6.
‡ See also Matt. xiv. 1—13. Luke iii. 19.
§ The affinity of the two accounts is unquestionable; but there is a difference in the name of Herodias's first husband, which, in the evangelist, is Philip; in Josephus, Herod. The difficulty, however, will not appear considerable, when we recollect how common it was in those times for the same person to bear two names. "Simon, which is called Peter: Lebbeus, whose surname is Thaddeus; Thomas, which is called Didymus; Simeon, who was called Niger; Saul, who was also called Paul." The solution is rendered likewise easier in the present case, by the consideration, that Herod the Great had children by seven or eight wives; that Josephus mentions three of his sons under the name of Herod: that it is nevertheless highly probable, that the brothers bore some additional name, by which they were distinguished from one another. Lardner, vol. ii. p. 897.
‖ Antiq. xviii. c. 7. sect. 10. ¶ Ib. xix. c. 5. sect. 1.

V. [p. 32.] Acts xii. 19—23. "And he (Herod) went down from Judea to Cesarea, and there abode.—And on a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them: and the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man; and immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xix. c. 8. sect. 2. "He went to the city of Cesarea. Here he celebrated shows in honour of Cæsar. On the second day of the shows, early in the morning, he came into the theatre, dressed in a robe of silver, of most curious workmanship. The rays of the rising sun, reflected from such a splendid garb, gave him a majestic and awful appearance. They called him a god; and entreated him to be propitious to them, saying, Hitherto we have respected you as a man: but now we acknowledge you to be more than mortal. The king neither reproved these persons, nor rejected the impious flattery.—Immediately after this, he was seized with pains in his bowels, extremely violent at the very first.—He was carried therefore with all haste to his palace. These pains continually tormenting him, he expired in five days' time."

The reader will perceive the accordancy of these accounts in various particulars. The place (Cesarea), the set day, the gorgeous dress, the acclamations of the assembly, the peculiar turn of the flattery, the reception of it, the sudden and critical incursion of the disease, are circumstances noticed in both narratives. The worms, mentioned by Saint Luke, are not remarked by Josephus: but the appearance of these is a symptom, not unusually, I believe, attending the diseases which Josephus describes, *viz.* violent affections of the bowels.

VI. [p. 41.] Acts xxiv. 24. "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul."

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 6. sect. 1, 2. "Agrippa gave his sister Drusilla in marriage to Azizus, king of the Emesenes, when he had consented to be circumcised.—But this marriage of Drusilla with Azizus was dissolved in a short time after in this manner:—When *Felix was procurator of Judea*, having had a sight of her, he was mightily taken with her.—She was induced to transgress the laws of her country, and marry Felix."

Here the public station of Felix, the name of his wife, and the singular circumstance of her religion, all appear in perfect conformity with the evangelist.

VII. [p. 46.] "And after certain days, king Agrippa and Bernice came to Cesarea to salute Festus." By this passage we are in effect told, that Agrippa was a king, but not of Judea; for he came to salute Festus, who at this time administered the government of that country at Cesarea.

Now, how does the history of the age correspond with this account? The Agrippa here spoken of, was the son of Herod Agrippa, mentioned in the last article: but that he did not succeed to his father's kingdom, nor ever recovered Judea, which had been a part of it, we learn by the information of Josephus, who relates of him that, when his father was dead, Claudius intended, at first, to have put him immediately in possession of his father's dominions; but that Agrippa being then but seventeen years of age, the emperor was persuaded to alter his mind, and appointed Cuspius Fadus prefect of Judea, and the whole kingdom;* which Fadus was succeeded by Tiberius Alexander, Cumanus, Felix, Festus.† But that, though disappointed of his father's kingdom, in which was included Judea, he was nevertheless rightly styled *King* Agrippa, and that he was in possession of considerable territories bordering upon Judea, we gather from the same authority; for, after several successive donations of country, "Claudius, at the same time that he sent Felix to be procurator of Judea, promoted Agrippa from Chalcis to a greater *kingdom*, giving to him the tetrarchie which had been Philip's; and he added moreover the *kingdom* of Lysanias, and the province that had belonged to Varus."‡

Saint Paul addresses this person as a Jew: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." As the son of Herod Agrippa, who is described by Josephus to have been a zealous Jew, it is reasonable to suppose that he maintained the same profession. But what is more material to remark, because it is more close and circumstantial, is, that Saint Luke, speaking of the Father, (Acts xii. 1—3,) calls him Herod the king, and gives an example of the exercise of his authority at Jerusalem: speaking of the son, (xxv. 13,) he calls him king, but not of Judea; which distinction agrees correctly with the history.

VIII. [p. 51.] Acts xiii. 6. "And when they had gone through the isle (Cyprus) to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus, which was the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man."

The word, which is here translated 'deputy, signifies *proconsul*, and upon this word our observation is founded. The provinces of the Roman empire were of two kinds; those belonging to the emperor, in which the governor was called proprætor; and those belonging to the senate, in which the governor was called proconsul. And this was a regular distinction. Now it appears from Dio Cassius,§ that the province of Cyprus, which in the original distribution was assigned to the emperor, had been transferred to the senate, in exchange for some others; and that, after this exchange, the appropriate title of the Roman governor was proconsul.

Ib. xviii. 12. [p. 55.] "And when Gallio was deputy (*proconsul*) of Achaia."

The propriety of the title "proconsul," is in this passage still more critical. For the province of Achaia, after passing from the senate to the emperor, had been restored again by the emperor Claudius to the senate (and consequently its government had become *proconsular*) only six or seven years before the time in which this transaction is said to have taken place.‖ And what confines with strictness the appellation to the time is, that Achaia under the following reign ceased to be a Roman province at all.

IX. [p. 152.] It appears, as well from the general constitution of a Roman province, as from what Josephus delivers concerning the state of

* Antiq. xix. c. 9. ad fin.
† Ib. xx. De Bell. lib. ii.
‡ De Bell. lib. ii. c. 12. ad fin
§ De Bell lib. liv. ad A. U. 732.
‖ Suet. in Claud. c. 25. Dio. lib. lx.

Judea in particular,* that the power of life and death resided exclusively in the Roman governor; but that the Jews, nevertheless, had magistrates and a council, invested with a subordinate and municipal authority. This economy is discerned in every part of the Gospel narrative of our Saviour's crucifixion.

X. [p. 203.] Acts ix. 31. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria."

This *rest* synchronizes with the attempt of Caligula to place his statue in the temple of Jerusalem; the threat of which outrage produced amongst the Jews a consternation that, for a season, diverted their attention from every other object.†

XI. [p. 218.] Acts xxi. 30. "And they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple; and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came to the chief captain of the *band*, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains, and demanded, who he was, and what he had done; and some cried one thing, and some another, among the multitude: and, when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the *castle*. And when he came upon the *stairs*, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people."

In this quotation, we have the band of Roman soldiers at Jerusalem, their office (to suppress tumults,) the castle, the stairs, both, as it should seem, adjoining to the temple. Let us inquire whether we can find these particulars in any other record of that age and place.

Joseph. de Bell. lib. v. c. 5. sect. 8. "Antonia was situated at the angle of the western and northern porticoes of the outer temple. It was built upon a rock fifty cubits high, steep on all sides.—On that side where it joined to the porticoes of the temple, there were *stairs* reaching to each portico, by which the *guard* descended; for there was always lodged here a *Roman legion*, and posting themselves in their armour in several places in the porticoes, they kept a watch on the people on the feast days *to prevent all disorders;* for as the temple was a guard to the city, so was Antonia to the temple."

XII. [p. 224.] Acts iv. 1. "And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and *the captain of the temple*, and the Sadducees, came upon them." Here we have a public officer, under the title of captain of the temple, and he probably a Jew, as he accompanied the priests and Sadducees in apprehending the apostles.

Joseph. de Bell. lib. ii. c. 17. sect. 2. "And at the *temple*, Eleazar, the son of Ananias, the high-priest, a young man of a bold and resolute disposition, then *captain*, persuaded those who performed the sacred ministrations not to receive the gift or sacrifice of any stranger."

XIII. [p. 225.] Acts xxv. 12. "Then Festus, when he had conferred with the *council*, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go." That it was usual for the Roman presidents to have a council, consisting of their friends, and other chief Romans in the province, appears expressly in the following passage of Cicero's oration against Verres:—"Illud negare posses, aut nunc negabis, te, concilio tuo dimisso, viris primariis, qui in consilio C. Sacerdotis fuerant, tibique esse volebant, remotis, de re judicatâ judicâsse?"

XIV. [p. 235.] Acts xvi. 13. "And (at Philippi) on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made," or where a προσευχη, oratory, or place of prayer was allowed. The particularity to be remarked, is the situation of the place where prayer was wont to be made, *viz.* by a *river-side*.

Philo, describing the conduct of the Jews of Alexandria, on a certain public occasion, relates of them, that "early in the morning, flocking out of the gates of the city, they go to the *neighbouring shores* (for the προσευχαι were destroyed,) and, standing in a most pure place, they lift up their voices with one accord."*

Josephus gives us a decree of the city of Halicarnassus, permitting the Jews to build oratories; a part of which decree runs thus:—"We ordain that the Jews who are willing, men and women, do observe the sabbaths, and perform sacred rites according to the Jewish laws, and *build oratories by the sea-side*."†

Tertullian, among other Jewish rites and customs, such as feasts, sabbaths, fasts, and unleavened bread, mentions "orationes *litorales;*" that is, prayers by the river-side.‡

XV. [p. 255.] Acts xxvi. 5. "After the most *straitest* sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee."

Joseph. de Bell. lib. i. c. 5. sect. 2. "The Pharisees were reckoned the most religious of any of the Jews, and to be the most *exact* and skilful in explaining the laws."

In the original, there is an agreement not only in the sense, but in the expression, it being the same Greek adjective, which is rendered "strait" in the Acts, and "exact" in Josephus.

XVI. [p. 255.] Mark vii. 3, 4. "The Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders; and many other things there be which they have received to hold."

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 10. sect. 6. "The Pharisees have delivered to the people many institutions, as received from the fathers, which are not written in the law of Moses."

XVII. [p. 259.] Acts xxiii. 8. "For the Sadducees say, that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both."

Joseph. de Bell. lib. ii. c. 8. sect. 14. "They (the Pharisees) believe every soul to be immortal, but that the soul of the good only passes into another body, and that the soul of the wicked is punished with eternal punishment." On the other hand, (Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 1. sect. 4,) "It is the opinion of the Sadducees, that souls perish with the bodies."

XVIII. [p. 268.] Acts v. 17. "Then the high-priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation." Saint Luke here intimates, that the high-priest was a Sadducee; which is a character one would not have expected to meet with in that station. The circumstance, re-

* Antiq. lib. xx. c. 8. sect. 5; c. 1. sect. 2.
† Joseph. de Bell. lib. xi. c. 13. sect. 1, 3, 4.

* Philo. in Flacc. p. 382.
† Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 10. sect. 24.
‡ Tertul. ad Nat. lib. i. c. 13.

markable as it is, was not however without examples.

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 10. sect. 6, 7. "John Hyrcanus, high-priest of the Jews, forsook the Pharisees upon a disgust, and joined himself to the party of the Sadducees." This high-priest died one hundred and seven years before the Christian era.

Again, (Antiq. lib. xx. c. 8. sect. 1.) "This Ananus the younger, who, as we have said just now, had received the high-priesthood, was fierce and haughty in his behaviour, and, above all men, bold and daring, and, moreover, *was of the sect of the Saddwees.*" This high-priest lived little more than twenty years after the transaction in the Acts.

XIX. [p. 282.] Luke ix. 51. "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before his face. And they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem."

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 5. sect. 1. "It was the custom of the Galileans, who went up to the holy city at the feasts, to travel through the country of Samaria. As they were in their journey, some inhabitants of the village called Ginæa, which lies on the borders of Samaria and the great plain, falling upon them, killed a great many of them."

XX. [p. 278.] John iv. 20. "Our fathers," said the Samaritan woman, "worshipped in *this mountain;* and ye say, that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 5. sect. 1. "Commanding them to meet him at *mount Gerizim*, which is by them (the Samaritans) esteemed the most sacred of all mountains."

XXI. [p. 312.] Matt. xxvi. 3. "Then assembled together the chief priests, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high-priest, *who was called Caiaphas.*" That Caiaphas was high-priest, and high-priest throughout the presidentship of Pontius Pilate, and consequently at this time, appears from the following account:—He was made high-priest by Valerius Gratus, *predecessor* of Pontius Pilate, and was removed from his office by Vitellius, president of Syria, *after* Pilate was sent away out of the province of Judea. Josephus relates the *advancement* of Caiaphas to the high-priesthood in this manner: "Gratus gave the high-priesthood to Simon, the son of Camithus. He, having enjoyed this honour not above a year, was succeeded by Joseph, *who is also called Caiaphas.** After this, Gratus went away for Rome, having been eleven years in Judea; and *Pontius Pilate came thither as his successor.*" Of the *removal* of Caiaphas from his office, Josephus, likewise, afterward informs us; and connects it with a circumstance which fixes the time to a date subsequent to the determination of Pilate's government—"Vitellius," he tells us, "ordered *Pilate to repair to Rome;* and *after that*, went up himself to Jerusalem, and then gave directions concerning several matters. And having done these things, he took away the priesthood from *the high-priest* Joseph, who is called *Caiaphas.*"†

XXII. (Michaelis, c. xi. sect. 11.) Acts xxiii. 4. "And they that stood by, said, Revilest thou God's high-priest? Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest." Now, upon inquiry into the history of the age, it turns out, that Ananias, of whom this is spoken, was, in truth, *not* the high-priest, though he was sitting in judgment in that assumed capacity. The case was, that he had formerly holden the office, and had been deposed; that the person who succeeded him had been murdered; that another was not yet appointed to the station; and that, during the vacancy, he had, of his own authority, taken upon himself the discharge of the office.* This singular situation of the high-priesthood took place during the interval between the death of Jonathan, who was murdered by order of Felix, and the accession of Ishmael who was invested with the high-priesthood by Agrippa; and precisely in this interval it happened that Saint Paul was apprehended, and brought before the Jewish council.

XXIII. [p. 323.] Matt. xxvi. 59. "Now the *chief priests* and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against him."

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 15. sect. 3, 4. "Then might be seen the *high-priests themselves*, with ashes on their heads, and their breasts naked."

The agreement here consists in speaking of the high-priests or chief priests (for the name in the original is the same) in the *plural number*, when, in strictness, there was only *one* high-priest: which may be considered as a proof, that the evangelists were habituated to the manner of speaking then in use, because they retain it when it is neither accurate nor just. For the sake of brevity, I have put down, from Josephus, only a single example of the application of this title in the plural number; but it is his usual style.

Ib. [p. 871.] Luke iii. 1. "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, *Annas and Caiaphas being the high-priests*, the word of God came unto John." There is a passage in Josephus very nearly parallel to this, and which may at least serve to vindicate the evangelists from objection, with respect to his giving the title of high-priest specifically to two persons at the same time: "Quadratus sent two others of the most powerful men of the Jews, as also the *high-priests Jonathan and Ananias.*"† That Annas was a person in an eminent station, and possessed an authority co-ordinate with, or next to, that of the high-priest properly so called, may be inferred from Saint John's Gospel, which, in the history of Christ's crucifixion, relates that "the soldiers led him away to Annas first."‡ And this might be noticed as an example of undesigned coincidence in the two evangelists.

Again, [p. 870.] Acts iv. 6, Annas is called the high-priest, though Caiaphas was in the office of the high-priesthood. In like manner, in Josephus,§ "Joseph, the son of Gorion, and the high-priest Ananus, were chosen to be supreme governors of all things in the city." Yet Ananus, though here called the high-priest Ananus, was not then in the office of the high-priesthood. The truth is, there is an indeterminateness in the use of this title in the Gospel: sometimes it is applied exclusively to the person who held the office at the time; sometimes to one or two more, who probably shared with him some of the powers or

* Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 2. sect. 2. † Ib. lxvii. c. 5. sect. 3.

* Antiq. l. xx. c. 5. sect. 2; c. 9. sect. 2.
† De Bell. lib. ix. c. 12. sect. 6. ‡ xviii. 13.
§ Lib. ii. c. 20. sect. 3.

functions of the office; and, sometimes, to such of the priests as were eminent by their station or character;* and there is the very same indeterminateness in Josephus.

XXIV. [p. 347.] John xix. 19, 20. "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross." That such was the custom of the Romans on these occasions, appears from passages of Suetonius and Dio Cassius: "Patrem familias—canibus objecit, cum hoc *titulo*, Impiè locutus parmularius." Suet. Domit. cap. x. And in Dio Cassius we have the following: "Having led him through the midst of the court or assembly, *with a writing signifying the cause of his death*, and afterward crucifying him."—Book liv.

Ib. "And it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin." That it was also usual about this time, in Jerusalem, to set up advertisements in *different* languages, is gathered from the account which Josephus gives of an expostulatory message from Titus to the Jews, when the city was almost in his hands; in which he says, Did ye not erect pillars with inscriptions on them, *in the Greek and in our language*, "Let no one pass beyond these bounds?"

XXV. [p. 352.] Matt. xxvii. 26. "When he had *scourged* Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified."

The following passages occur in Josephus:

"Being *beaten*, they were crucified opposite to the citadel."†

"Whom, having *first scourged with whips*, he crucified."‡

"He was burnt alive, *having been first beaten.*"§

To which may be added one from Livy, lib. xi. c. 5. "Productique omnes, *virgisque cæsi*, ac securi percussi."

A modern example may illustrate the use we make of this instance. The preceding of a capital execution by the corporal punishment of the sufferer, is a practice unknown in England, but retained, in some instances at least, as appears by the late execution of a regicide, in Sweden. This circumstance, therefore, in the account of an English execution, purporting to come from an English writer, would not only bring a suspicion upon the truth of the account, but would, in a considerable degree, impeach its pretensions of having been written by the author whose name it bore. Whereas the same circumstance, in the account of a Swedish execution, would verify the account, and support the authenticity of the book in which it was found; or, at least, would prove that the author, whoever he was, possessed the information and the knowledge which he ought to possess.

XXVI. [p. 353.] John xix. 16. "And they took Jesus, and led him away; and he, *bearing his cross*, went forth."

Plutarch, De iis qui serò puniuntur, p. 554: à Paris, 1624. "Every kind of wickedness produces its own particular torment, just as every malefactor, when he is brought forth to execution, *carries his own cross.*"

XXVII. John xix. 32. "Then came the soldiers, and *brake the legs* of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him."

Constantine abolished the punishment of the cross; in commending which edict, a heathen writer notices this very circumstance of *breaking the legs:* "Eò pius, ut etiam vetus veterrimumque supplicium, patibulum, et *cruribus suffringendis*, primus removerit."—Aur. Vict. Cæs. cap. xli.

XXVIII. [p. 457.] Acts iii. 1. "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple, at the hour of prayer, being the *ninth* hour."

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. c. 7. sect. 8. "Twice every day, in the morning and at the *ninth* hour, the priests perform their duty at the altar."

XXIX. [p. 462.] Acts xv. 21. "For Moses, of old time, hath, in every city, them that preach him, *being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.*"

Joseph. contra Ap. l. ii. "He (Moses) gave us the law, the most excellent of all institutions; nor did he appoint that it should be heard once only, or twice, or often, but that laying aside all other works, we should meet together *every week* to hear it read, and gain a perfect understanding of it."

XXX. [p. 465.] Acts xxi. 23. "We have four men, which have a *vow* on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, that they may *shave their heads.*"

Joseph. de Bell. l. xi. c. 15. "It is customary for those who have been afflicted with some distemper, or have laboured under any other difficulties, to make a *vow* thirty days before they offer sacrifices, to abstain from wine, and *shave the hair of their heads.*"

Ib. v. 21. "Them take, and purify thyself with them, and *be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads.*"

Joseph. Antiq. l. xix. c. 6. "He (Herod Agrippa) coming to Jerusalem, offered up sacrifices of thanksgiving, and omitted nothing that was prescribed by the law. For which reason *he also ordered a good number of Nazarites to be shaved.*" We here find that it was an act of piety amongst the Jews, to defray for those who were under the Nazarite vow the expenses which attended its completion; and that the phrase was, "that they might be shaved." The custom and the expression are both remarkable, and both in close conformity with the Scripture account.

XXXI. [p. 474.] 2 Cor. xi. 24. "Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes, *save one.*"

Joseph. Antiq. iv. c. 8. sect. 21. "He that acts contrary hereto, let him receive forty stripes, *wanting one*, from the public officer."

The coincidence here is singular, because the law *allowed* forty stripes:—"Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed." Deut. xxv. 3. It proves that the author of the Epistle to the Corinthians was guided, not by books, but by facts; because this statement agrees with the actual custom, even when that custom deviated from the written law, and from what he must have learnt by consulting the Jewish code, as set forth in the Old Testament.

XXXII. [p. 490.] Luke iii. 12. "Then came also *publicans* to be baptised." From this quotation, as well as from the history of Levi or Matthew, (Luke v. 29,) and of Zaccheus, (Luke xix. 2,) it appears, that the publicans or tax-gatherers were, frequently at least, if not always, Jews: which, as the country was then under a Roman government, and the taxes were paid to the Romans, was a circumstance not to be expected. That it was the truth however of the case, appears, from a short passage of Josephus.

De Bell. lib. ii. c. 14. sect. 45. "But, Florus not

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* Mark xiv. 53.
† P. 1247, edit. 24. Huds.
‡ P. 1080, edit. 45.
§ P. 1327, edit. 43.

restraining these practices by his authority, the chief men of the Jews, *among whom was John the publican*, not knowing well what course to take, wait upon Florus, and give him eight talents of silver to stop the building."

XXXIII. [p. 496.] Acts xxii. 25. "And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you *to scourge a man that is a Roman*, and uncondemned?"

"Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum; scelus verberari."—Cic. in Verr.

"Cædebatur virgis, in medio foro Messanæ, civis Romanus, Judices: cùm intereà nullus gemitus, nulla vox alia, istius miseri inter dolorem crepitumque plagarum audiebatur, nisi hæc, *Civis Romanus sum.*"

XXXIV. [p. 513.] Acts xxii. 27. "Then the chief captain came, and said unto him (Paul), Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea." The circumstance here to be noticed is, that a *Jew* was a Roman citizen.

Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 10. sect. 13. "Lucius Lentulus, the consul, declared, I have dismissed from the service *the Jewish Roman citizens*, who observe the rights of the Jewish religion at Ephesus."

Ib. ver. 28. "And the chief captain answered, *With a great sum obtained I this freedom.*"

Dio Cassius, lib. lx. "This privilege, which had been *bought formerly at a great price*, became so cheap, that it was commonly said, a man might be made a Roman citizen for a few pieces of broken glass."

XXXV. [p. 521.] Acts xxviii. 16. "And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with *a soldier that kept him.*"

With which join ver 20. "For the hope of Israel, I am bound with *this chain.*"

"Quemadmodùm eadem *catena* et custodiam et *militem* copulat; sic ista, quæ tam dissimilia sunt, pariter incedunt."—Seneca, Ep. v.

"Proconsul æstimare solet, utrùm in carcerem recipienda sit persona, an *militi tradenda.*"—Ulpian. l. i. sect. De Custod. et Exhib. Reor.

In the confinement of Agrippa by the order of Tiberius, Antonia managed, that the centurion who presided over the guards, and the *soldier to whom Agrippa was to be bound*, might be men of mild character. (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 7. sect. 5.) After the accession of Caligula, Agrippa also, like Paul, was suffered to dwell, yet as a prisoner, in his own house.

XXXVI. [p. 531.] Acts xxvii. 1. "And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul, *and certain other prisoners*, unto one named Julius." Since not only Paul but certain other *prisoners* were sent by the same ship into Italy, the text must be considered as carrying with it an intimation, that the sending of persons from Judea to be tried at Rome, was an ordinary practice. That in truth it was so, is made out by a variety of examples which the writings of Josephus furnish; and, amongst others, by the following, which comes near both to the time and the subject of the instance in the Acts. "Felix, for some slight offence, *bound and sent to Rome* several priests of his acquaintance, and very good and honest men, to answer for themselves to Cæsar."—Joseph. in Vit. sect. 3.

XXXVII. [p. 539.] Acts xi. 27. "And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch; and there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world (or all the country); *which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.*"

Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. c. 4. sect. 2. "In their time (*i. e.* about the fifth or sixth year of Claudius) a great dearth happened in Judea."

XXXVIII. [p. 555.] Acts xviii. 1, 2. "Because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome."

Suet. Claud. c. xxv. "Judæos, impulsore Chresto assiduè tumultuantes, Româ expulit."

XXXIX. [p. 664.] Acts v. 37. "After this man, rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him."

Joseph. de Bell. l. vii. "He (*viz.* the person who in another place is called, by Josephus, Judas the Galilean, or Judas of Galilee) persuaded not a few not to enroll themselves, when Cyrenius the censor was sent into Judea."

XL. [p. 942.] Acts xxi. 38. "Art not thou that Egyptian which, before these days, madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?"

Joseph. de Bell. l. ii. c. 13. sect. 5. "But the Egyptian false prophet brought a yet heavier disaster upon the Jews; for this impostor, coming into the country, and gaining the reputation of a prophet, gathered together thirty thousand men, who were deceived by him. Having brought them round out of the wilderness, up to the mount of Olives, he intended from thence to make his attack upon Jerusalem; but Felix, coming suddenly upon him with the Roman soldiers, prevented the attack."—A great number, or (as it should rather be rendered) the greatest part, of those that were with him, were either slain or taken prisoners.

In these two passages, the designation of this impostor, an "Egyptian," without the proper name; "the wilderness;" his escape, though his followers were destroyed; the time of the transaction, in the presidentship of Felix, which could not be any long time before the words in Luke are supposed to have been spoken; are circumstances of close correspondency. There is one, and only one, point of disagreement, and that is, in the number of his followers, which in the Acts are called four thousand, and by Josephus thirty thousand: but, beside that the names of numbers, more than any other words, are liable to the errors of transcribers, we are, in the present instance, under the less concern to reconcile the evangelist with Josephus, as Josephus is not, in this point, consistent with himself. For whereas, in the passage here quoted, he calls the number thirty thousand, and tells us that the greatest part, or a great number (according as his words are rendered) of those that were with him, were destroyed; in his Antiquities, he represents four hundred to have been killed upon this occasion, and two hundred taken prisoners:* which certainly was not the "greatest part," nor "a great part," nor "a great number," out of thirty thousand. It is probable also, that Lysias and Josephus spoke of the expedition in its different stages: Lysias, of those who followed the Egyptian out of Jerusalem: Josephus,

* Lib. 20. c. 7. sect. 6.

of all who were collected about him afterward, from different quarters.

XLI. (Lardner's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, vol. iii. p. 21.) Acts xvii. 22. "Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars-hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious; for as I passed by and beheld your devotions, *I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.* Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

Diogenes Laërtius, who wrote about the year 210, in his history of Epimenides, who is supposed to have flourished nearly six hundred years before Christ, relates of him the following story: that being invited to Athens for the purpose, he delivered the city from a pestilence in this manner;—"Taking several sheep, some black, others white, he had them up to the Areopagus, and then let them go where they would, and gave orders to those who followed them, wherever any of them should lie down, to sacrifice it to the god to whom it belonged; and so the plague ceased.—Hence," says the historian, "it has come to pass, *that to this present time, may be found in the boroughs of the Athenians* ANONYMOUS *altars:* a memorial of the expiation then made."* These altars, it may be presumed, were called *anonymous*, because there was not the name of any particular deity inscribed upon them.

Pausanias, who wrote before the end of the second century, in his description of Athens, having mentioned an altar of Jupiter Olympius, adds, "*And nigh unto it is an altar of unknown gods.*"† And in another place, he speaks "*of altars of gods called unknown.*"‡

Philostratus, who wrote in the beginning of the third century, records it as an observation of Apollonius Tyanæus, "That it was wise to speak well of all the gods, *especially at Athens, where altars of unknown demons were erected.*"§

The *author of the dialogue Philopatris*, by many supposed to have been Lucian, who wrote about the year 170, by others some anonymous Heathen writer of the fourth century, makes Critias swear *by the unknown god of Athens;* and, near the end of the dialogue, has these words, "But let us find out *the unknown god of Athens*, and, stretching our hands to heaven, offer to him our praises and thanksgivings."‖

This is a very curious and a very important coincidence. It appears beyond controversy, that altars with this inscription were existing at Athens, at the time when Saint Paul is alleged to have been there. It seems also (which is very worthy of observation), that this inscription was *peculiar* to the Athenians. There is no evidence that there were altars inscribed "to the unknown god" in any other country. Supposing the history of Saint Paul to have been a fable, how is it possible that such a writer as the author of the Acts of the Apostles was, should hit upon a circumstance so extraordinary, and introduce it by an allusion so suitable to Saint Paul's office and character?

THE examples here collected will be sufficient, I hope, to satisfy us, that the writers of the Christian history knew something of what they were writing about. The argument is also strengthened by the following considerations:—

I. That these agreements appear, not only in articles of public history, but sometimes, in minute, recondite, and very peculiar circumstances, in which, of all others, a forger is most likely to have been found tripping.

II. That the destruction of Jerusalem, which took place forty years after the commencement of the Christian institution, produced such a change in the state of the country, and the condition of the Jews, that a writer who was unacquainted with the circumstances of the nation *before* that event, would find it difficult to avoid mistakes, in endeavouring to give detailed accounts of transactions connected with those circumstances, forasmuch as he could no longer have a living exemplar to copy from.

III. That there appears, in the writers of the New Testament, a knowledge of the affairs of those times, which we do not find in authors of later ages. In particular, "many of the Christian writers of the second and third centuries, and of the following ages, had false notions concerning the state of Judea, between the nativity of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem."* Therefore *they* could not have composed our histories.

Amidst so many conformities, we are not to wonder that we meet with some difficulties. The principal of these I will put down, together with the solutions which they have received. But in doing this, I must be contented with a brevity better suited to the limits of my volume than to the nature of a controversial argument. For the historical proofs of my assertions, and for the Greek criticisms upon which some of them are founded, I refer the reader to the second volume of the first part of Dr. Lardner's large work.

I. The taxing during which Jesus was born, was "first made," as we read, according to our translation, in Saint Luke, "whilst Cyrenius was governor of Syria."† Now it turns out that Cyrenius was not governor of Syria until twelve or, at the soonest, ten years after the birth of Christ; and that a taxing, census, or assessment, was made in Judea in the beginning of his government. The charge, therefore, brought against the evangelist is, that, intending to refer to this taxing, he has misplaced the date of it by an error of ten or twelve years.

The answer to the accusation is found in his using the word "first:"—"And this taxing was *first* made:" for according to the mistake imputed to the evangelist, this word could have no signification whatever; it could have had no place in his narrative: because, let it relate to what it will, taxing, census, enrolment, or assessment, it imports that the writer had more than one of those in contemplation. It acquits him therefore of the charge: it is inconsistent with the supposition of his knowing only of the taxing in the beginning of Cyrenius's government. And if the evangelist knew (which this word proves that he did) of some other taxing beside that, it is too much, for the sake of convicting him of a mistake, to lay it down as certain that he intended to refer to *that*.

The sentence in Saint Luke may be construed thus: "This was the first assessment (or enrolment) of Cyrenius, governor of Syria;"‡ the words

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* In Epimenide, l. i. segm. 110. † Paus. l. v. p. 412.
‡ Paus. l. i. p. 4. § Philos. Apoll. Tyan. l. vi. c. 3.
‖ Lucian. in Philop. tom. ii. Græv. p. 767, 780.

* Lardner, part i. vol. ii. p. 960. † Chap. ii. v. 2.
‡ If the word which we render "first," be rendered

"governor of Syria" being used after the name of Cyrenius as his addition or title. And this title belonging to him at the time of writing the account, was naturally enough subjoined to his name, though acquired after the transaction which the account describes. A modern writer who was not very exact in the choice of his expressions, in relating the affairs of the East Indies, might easily say, that such a thing was done by *Governor* Hastings; though, in truth, the thing had been done by him before his advancement to the station from which he received the name of governor. And this, as we contend, is precisely the inaccuracy which has produced the difficulty in Saint Luke.

At any rate, it appears from the form of the expression, that he had two taxings or enrolments in contemplation. And if Cyrenius had been sent upon this business into Judea, before he became governor of Syria (against which supposition there is no proof, but rather external evidence of an enrolment going on about this time under some person or other,*) then the census, on all hands acknowledged to have been made by him in the beginning of his government, would form a second, so as to occasion the other to be called the *first*.

II. Another chronological objection arises upon a date assigned in the beginning of the third chapter of Saint Luke.† "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar,"—Jesus *began to be about thirty* years of age: for, supposing Jesus to have been born, as Saint Matthew, and Saint Luke also himself, relate, in the time of Herod, he must, according to the dates given in Josephus and by the Roman historians, have been at least thirty-one years of age in the fifteenth year of Tiberius. If he was born, as Saint Matthew's narrative intimates, one or two years before Herod's death, he would have been thirty-two or thirty-three years old at that time.

This is the difficulty: the solution turns upon an alteration in the construction of the Greek. Saint Luke's words in the original are allowed, by the general opinion of learned men, to signify, not "that Jesus began to be about thirty years of age," but "that he was about thirty years of age when he began his ministry." This construction being admitted, the adverb "about" gives us all the latitude we want, and more, especially when applied, as it is in the present instance, to a decimal number; for such numbers, even without this qualifying addition, are often used in a laxer sense, than is here contended for.‡

III. Acts v. 36. "For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered and brought to nought."

Josephus has preserved the account of an impostor of the name of Theudas, who created some disturbances, and was slain; but according to the date assigned to this man's appearance (in which, however, it is very possible that Josephus may have been mistaken,*) it must have been, at least, seven years after Gamaliel's speech, of which this text is a part, was delivered. It has been replied to the objection, † that there might be two impostors of this name: and it has been observed, in order to give a general probability to the solution, that the same thing appears to have happened in other instances of the same kind. It is proved from Josephus, that there were not fewer than four persons of the name of Simon within forty years, and not fewer than three of the name of Judas within ten years, who were all leaders of insurrections: and it is likewise recorded by the historian, that, upon the death of Herod the Great, (which agrees very well with the time of the commotion referred to by Gamaliel, and with his manner of stating that time, "before these days,") there were innumerable disturbances in Judea. ‡ Archbishop Usher was of opinion, that one of the three Judases above-mentioned was Gamaliel's Theudas; § and that with a less variation of the name than we actually find in the Gospels, where one of the twelve apostles is called, by Luke, Judas; and by Mark, Thaddeus. ‖ Origen, however he came at his information, appears to have believed that there was an impostor of the name of Theudas before the nativity of Christ. ¶

IV. Matt. xxiii. 34. "Wherefore, behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of *Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.*"

There is a Zacharias, whose death is related in the second book of Chronicles,** in a manner which perfectly supports our Saviour's allusion. But this Zacharias was the son of *Jehoiada*.

There is also Zacharias the prophet; who was

"before," which it has been strongly contended that the Greek idiom allows of, the whole difficulty vanishes: for then the passage would be,—"Now this taxing was made before Cyrenius was governor of Syria:" which corresponds with the chronology. But I rather choose to argue, that however the word "first" be rendered, to give it a meaning at all, it militates with the objection. In this I think there can be no mistake.

* Josephus (Antiq. xvii. c. 2. sect. 6.) has this remarkable passage: "When therefore the whole Jewish nation took an oath to be faithful to Cæsar, and the interests of the king." This transaction corresponds in the course of the history with the time of Christ's birth. What is called a census, and which we render taxing, was delivering upon oath an account of their property. This might be accompanied with an oath of fidelity, or might be mistaken by Josephus for it.

† Lardner, part i. vol. ii. p. 786.

‡ Livy, speaking of the peace which the conduct of Romulus had procured to the state, during the *whole* reign of his successor (Numa), has these words;††—"Ab illo enim profectis vitibus datis tantum valuit, ut, in *quadraginta* deinde annos, tutam pacem haberet:" yet afterward, in the same chapter, "Romulus (he says) septem et triginta regnavit annos. Numa tres et quadraginta."

* Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament (Marsh's Translation,) vol. i. p. 61.

† Lardner, part i. vol. ii. p. 922.

‡ Antiq. l. xvii. c. 12. sect. 4. § Annals, p. 797.

‖ Luke vi. 16. Mark iii. 18.

¶ Orig. cont. Cels. p. 44.

** "And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, *and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord!*"—2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

†† Liv. Hist. c. 1. sect. 16.

the son of Barachiah, and is so described in the superscription of his prophecy, but of whose death we have no account.

I have little doubt, but that the first Zacharias was the person spoken of by our Saviour; and that the name of the father has been since added, or changed, by some one, who took it from the title of the prophecy, which happened to be better known to him than the history in the Chronicles.

There is likewise a Zacharias, the son of Baruch, related by Josephus to have been slain in the temple a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem. It has been insinuated, that the words put into our Saviour's mouth contain a reference to this transaction, and were composed by some writer, who either confounded the time of the transaction with our Saviour's age, or inadvertently overlooked the anachronism.

Now suppose it to have been so; suppose these words to have been suggested by the transaction related in Josephus, and to have been falsely ascribed to Christ; and observe what extraordinary coincidences (accidentally, as it must in that case have been) attend the forger's mistake.

First, that we have a Zacharias in the book of Chronicles, whose death, and the manner of it, corresponds with the allusion.

Secondly, that although the name of this person's father be erroneously put down in the Gospel, yet we have a way of accounting for the error, by showing another Zacharias in the Jewish Scriptures, much better known than the former, whose patronymic was actually that which appears in the text.

Every one who thinks upon this subject, will find these to be circumstances which could not have met together in a mistake, which did not proceed from the circumstances themselves.

I have noticed, I think, all the difficulties of this kind. They are few: some of them admit of a clear, others of a probable solution. The reader will compare them with the number, the variety, the closeness, and the satisfactoriness, of the instances which are to be set against them; and he will remember the scantiness, in many cases, of our intelligence, and that difficulties always attend imperfect information.

CHAPTER VII.

Undesigned Coincidences.

BETWEEN the letters which bear the name of Saint Paul in our collection, and his history in the Acts of the Apostles, there exist many notes of correspondency. The simple perusal of the writings is sufficient to prove, that neither the history was taken from the letters, nor the letters from the history. And the *undesignedness* of the agreements (which undesignedness is gathered from their latency, their minuteness, their obliquity, the suitableness of the circumstances in which they consist, to the places in which those circumstances occur, and the circuitous references by which they are traced out) demonstrates that they have not been produced by meditation, or by any fraudulent contrivance. But coincidences, from which these causes are excluded, and which are too close and numerous to be accounted for by accidental concurrences of fiction, must necessarily have truth for their foundation.

This argument appeared to my mind of so much value (especially for its assuming nothing beside the existence of the books,) that I have pursued it through Saint Paul's thirteen epistles, in a work published by me four years ago, under the title of Horæ Paulinæ. I am sensible how feebly any argument which depends upon an induction of particulars, is represented without examples. On which account, I wished to have abridged my own volume, in the manner in which I have treated Dr. Lardner's in the preceding chapter. But, upon making the attempt, I did not find it in my power to render the articles intelligible by fewer words than I have there used. I must be content, therefore, to refer the reader to the work itself. And I would particularly invite his attention to the observations which are made in it upon the first three epistles. I persuade myself that he will find the proofs, both of agreement and undesignedness, supplied by these epistles, sufficient to support the conclusion which is there maintained, in favour both of the genuineness of the writings and the truth of the narrative.

It remains only, in this place, to point out how the argument *bears* upon the general question of the Christian history.

First, Saint Paul in these letters affirms in unequivocal terms, his own performance of miracles, and, what ought particularly to be remembered, "*That miracles were the signs of an apostle.*"* If this testimony come from Saint Paul's own hand, it is invaluable. And that it does so, the argument before us fixes in my mind a firm assurance.

Secondly, it shows that the series of action represented in the epistles of Saint Paul, was real; which alone lays a foundation for the proposition which forms the subject of the first part of our present work, *viz.* that the original witnesses of the Christian history devoted themselves to lives of toil, suffering, and danger, in consequence of their belief of the truth of that history, and for the sake of communicating the knowledge of it to others.

Thirdly, it proves that Luke, or whoever was the author of the Acts of the Apostles (for the argument does not depend upon the name of the author, though I know no reason for questioning it,) was well acquainted with Saint Paul's history; and that he probably was, what he professes himself to be, a companion of Saint Paul's travels; which, if true, establishes, in a considerable degree, the credit even of his Gospel, because it shows, that the writer, from his time, situation, and connexions, possessed opportunities of informing himself truly concerning the transactions which he relates. I have little difficulty in applying to the Gospel of Saint Luke what is proved concerning the Acts of the Apostles, considering them as two parts of the same history; for, though there are instances of *second* parts being forgeries, I know none where the second part is genuine, and the first not so.

I will only observe, as a sequel of the argument, though not noticed in my work, the remarkable similitude between the style of Saint John's Gos-

* Rom. xv. 18, 19. 2 Cor. xii. 12.

pel, and of Saint John's Epistle. The style of Saint John's is not at all the style of Saint Paul's Epistles, though both are very singular; nor is it the style of Saint James's or of Saint Peter's Epistle: but it bears a resemblance to the style of the Gospel inscribed with Saint John's name, so far as that resemblance can be expected to appear, which is not in simple narrative, so much as in reflections, and in the representation of discourses. Writings, so circumstanced, prove themselves, and one another, to be genuine. This correspondency is the more valuable, as the epistle itself asserts, in Saint John's manner indeed, but in terms sufficiently explicit, the writer's personal knowledge of Christ's history; "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you."* Who would not desire—who perceives not the value of an account, delivered by a writer so well informed as this?

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the History of the Resurrection.

The history of the resurrection of Christ is a part of the evidence of Christianity: but I do not know, whether the proper strength of this passage of the Christian history, or wherein its peculiar value, as a head of evidence, consists, be generally understood. It is not that, as a miracle, the resurrection ought to be accounted a more decisive proof of supernatural agency than other miracles are; it is not that, as it stands in the Gospels, it is better attested than some others; it is not, for either of these reasons, that more weight belongs to it than to other miracles, but for the following, *viz.* That it is completely certain that the apostles of Christ, and the first teachers of Christianity, asserted the fact. And this would have been certain, if the four Gospels had been lost, or never written. Every piece of Scripture recognises the resurrection. Every epistle of every apostle, every author contemporary with the apostles, of the age immediately succeeding the apostles, every writing from that age to the present, genuine or spurious, on the side of Christianity or against it, concur in representing the resurrection of Christ as an article of his history, received without doubt or disagreement by all who call themselves Christians, as alleged from the beginning by the propagators of the institution, and alleged as the centre of their testimony. Nothing, I apprehend, which a man does not himself see or hear, can be more certain to him than this point. I do not mean, that nothing can be more certain than that Christ rose from the dead; but that nothing can be more certain, than that his apostles, and the first teachers of Christianity, gave out that he did so. In the other parts of the gospel narrative, a question may be made, whether the things related of Christ be the very things which the apostles and first teachers of the religion delivered concerning him? And this question depends a good deal upon the evidence we possess of the genuineness, or rather, perhaps, of the antiquity, credit, and reception, of the books. On the subject of the resurrection, no such discussion is necessary, because no such doubt can be entertained. The only points which can enter into our consideration are, whether the apostles knowingly published a falsehood, or whether they were themselves deceived; whether either of these suppositions be possible. The first, I think, is pretty generally given up. The nature of the undertaking, and of the men; the extreme unlikelihood that such men should engage in such a measure as a *scheme*; their personal toils, and dangers, and sufferings, in the cause; their appropriation of their whole time to the object; the warm, and seemingly unaffected, zeal and earnestness with which they profess their sincerity; exempt their memory from the suspicion of imposture. The solution more deserving of notice, is that which would resolve the conduct of the apostles into *enthusiasm*; which would class the evidence of Christ's resurrection with the numerous stories that are extant of the apparitions of dead men. There are circumstances in the narrative, as it is preserved in our histories, which destroy this comparison entirely. It was not one person, but many, who saw him; they saw him not only separately but together, not only by night but by day, not at a distance but near, not once but several times; they not only saw him, but touched him, conversed with him, ate with him, examined his person to satisfy their doubts. These particulars are decisive: but they stand, I do admit, upon the credit of our records. I would answer, therefore, the insinuation of enthusiasm, by a circumstance which arises out of the nature of the thing; and the reality of which must be confessed by all who allow, what I believe is not denied, that the resurrection of Christ, whether true or false, was asserted by his disciples from the beginning; and that circumstance is, the non-production of the dead body. It is related in the history, what indeed the story of the resurrection necessarily implies, that the corpse was missing out of the sepulchre: it is related also in the history, that the Jews reported that the followers of Christ had stolen it away.* And this account, though loaded with great improbabilities, such as the situation of the disciples, their fears for their own safety at the time, the unlikelihood of their expecting to succeed, the difficulty of actual success,† and the inevitable consequence of detection and failure, was, nevertheless, the most credible account that could be given of the matter. But it proceeds entirely upon the supposition of fraud, as all the old objections did. What account can be given of the *body*, upon the supposition of enthusiasm? It is impossible our Lord's followers could believe that he was risen from the dead, if his corpse

* Chap. i. ver. 1—3.

* "And this saying (Saint Matthew writes) is commonly reported amongst the Jews until this day," chap. xxviii. 15. The evangelist may be thought good authority as to this point, even by those who do not admit his evidence in every other point: and this point is sufficient to prove that the body was missing.

It has been rightly, I think, observed by Dr. Townshend, (Dis. upon the Res. p. 126.) that the story of the guards carried collusion upon the face of it:—"His disciples came by night and stole him away, while we slept." Men in their circumstances would not have made such an acknowledgment of their negligence, without previous assurances of protection and impunity.

† "Especially at the full moon, the city full of people, many probably passing the whole night, as Jesus and his disciples had done, in the open air, the sepulchre so near the city as to be now enclosed within the walls."—Priestley on the Resurr. p. 24.

was lying before them. No enthusiasm ever reached to such a pitch of extravagancy as that: a spirit may be an illusion; a body is a real thing, an object of sense, in which there can be no mistake. All accounts of spectres leave the body in the grave. And, although the body of Christ might be removed by *fraud*, and for the purposes of fraud, yet, without any such intention, and by sincere but deluded men (which is the representation of the apostolic character we are now examining,) no such attempt could be made. The presence and the absence of the dead body are alike inconsistent with the hypothesis of enthusiasm; for, if present, it must have cured their enthusiasm at once; if absent, fraud, not enthusiasm, must have carried it away.

But farther, if we admit, upon the concurrent testimony of all the histories, so much of the account as states that the religion of Jesus was set up at Jerusalem, and set up with asserting, in the very place in which he had been buried, and a few days after he had been buried, his resurrection out of the grave, it is evident that, if his body could have been found, the Jews would have produced it, as the shortest and completest answer possible to the whole story. The attempt of the apostles could not have survived this refutation a moment. If we also admit, upon the authority of Saint Matthew, that the Jews were advertised of the expectation of Christ's followers, and that they had taken due precaution in consequence of this notice, and that the body was in marked and public custody, the observation receives more force still. For, notwithstanding their precaution, and although, thus prepared and forewarned; when the story of the resurrection of Christ came forth, as it immediately did; when it was publicly asserted by his disciples, and made the ground and basis of their preaching in his name, and collecting followers to his religion, the Jews had not the body to produce: but were obliged to meet the testimony of the apostles by an answer, not containing indeed any impossibility in itself, but absolutely inconsistent with the supposition of their integrity; that is, in other words, inconsistent with the supposition which would resolve their conduct into enthusiasm.

CHAPTER IX.

The Propagation of Christianity.

In this argument, the first consideration is the fact; in what degree, within what time, and to what extent, Christianity was actually propagated.

The accounts of the matter, which can be collected from our books, are as follow: A *few days* after Christ's disappearance out of the world, we find an assembly of disciples at Jerusalem, to the number of "about one hundred and twenty;"* which hundred and twenty were, probably, a little association of believers, met together, not merely as believers in Christ, but as personally connected with the apostles, and with one another. Whatever was the number of believers then in Jerusalem, we have no reason to be surprised that so small a company should assemble: for there is no proof, that the followers of Christ were yet formed into a society; that the society was reduced into any order; that it was at this time even understood that a new religion (in the sense which that term conveys to us) was to be set up in the world, or how the professors of that religion were to be distinguished from the rest of mankind. The death of Christ had left, we may suppose, the generality of his disciples in great doubt, both as to what they were to do, and concerning what was to follow.

This meeting was holden, as we have already said, a few days after Christ's ascension: for, ten days after that event was the day of Pentecost, when, as our history relates,* upon a signal display of Divine agency attending the persons of the apostles, there were added to the society "about three thousand souls."† But here, it is not, I think, to be taken, that these three thousand were all converted by this single miracle; but rather that many, who before were believers in Christ, became now professors of Christianity; that is to say, when they found that a religion was to be established, a society formed and set up in the name of Christ, governed by his laws, avowing their belief in his mission, united amongst themselves, and separated from the rest of the world by visible distinctions; in pursuance of their former conviction, and by virtue of what they had heard and seen and known of Christ's history, they publicly became members of it.

We read in the fourth chapter‡ of the Acts, that, soon after this, "the number of the men," *i. e.* the society openly professing their belief in Christ, "was about five thousand." So that here is an increase of two thousand within a very short time. And it is probable that there were many, both now and afterward, who, although they believed in Christ, did not think it necessary to join themselves to this society; or who waited to see what was likely to become of it. Gamaliel, whose advice to the Jewish council is recorded Acts v. 34, appears to have been of this description; perhaps Nicodemus, and perhaps also Joseph of Arimathea. This class of men, their character and their rank, are likewise pointed out by Saint John, in the twelfth chapter of his Gospel: "Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him: but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Persons, such as these, might admit the miracles of Christ, without being immediately convinced that they were under obligation to make a public profession of Christianity, at the risk of all that was dear to them in life, and even of life itself.§

* Acts i. 15.

* Acts ii. 1. † Acts ii. 41. ‡ Ver. 4.

§ "Beside those who professed, and those who rejected and opposed, Christianity, there were, in all probability, multitudes between both, neither perfect Christians, nor yet unbelievers. They had a favourable opinion of the Gospel, but worldly considerations made them unwilling to own it. There were many circumstances which inclined them to think that Christianity was a Divine revelation, but there were many inconveniences which attended the open profession of it: and they could not find in themselves courage enough to bear them, to disoblige their friends and family, to ruin their fortunes, to lose their reputation, their liberty, and their life, for the sake of the new religion. Therefore they were willing to hope, that if they endeavoured to observe the great principles of morality, which Christ had represented as the principal part, the sum and substance, of religion; if they thought honourably of the gospel, if they offered no injury to the Christians, if they did them all the services that they could *safely*

Christianity, however, proceeded to increase in Jerusalem by a progress equally rapid with its first success; for, in the next* chapter of our history, we read that "believers were the more added to the Lord, *multitudes* both of men and women." And this enlargement of the new society appears in the first verse of the succeeding chapter, wherein we are told, that, "when the number of the disciples was *multiplied*, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected:"† and, afterward in the same chapter, it is declared expressly, that "the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

This I call the first period in the propagation of Christianity. It commences with the ascension of Christ, and extends, as may be collected from incidental notes of time,‡ to something more than one year after that event. During which term, the preaching of Christianity, so far as our documents inform us, was confined to the single city of Jerusalem. And how did it succeed there? The first assembly which we meet with of Christ's disciples, and that a few days after his removal from the world, consisted of "one hundred and twenty." About a week after this, "three thousand were added in one day;" and the number of Christians, publicly baptized, and publicly associating together, was very soon increased to "five thousand." "Multitudes both of men and women continued to be added;" "disciples multiplied greatly," and "many of the Jewish priesthood, as well as others, became obedient to the faith;" and this within a space of less than two years from the commencement of the institution.

By reason of a persecution raised against the church at Jerusalem, the converts were driven from that city, and dispersed throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria.§ Wherever they came, they brought their religion with them: for, our historian informs us,‖ that "they, that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word." The effect of this preaching comes afterward to be noticed, where the historian is led, in the course of his narrative, to observe, that *then* (*i. e.* about three years posterior to this,¶) "the churches had rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." This was the work of the second period, which comprises about four years.

Hitherto the preaching of the Gospel had been confined to Jews, to Jewish proselytes, and to Samaritans. And I cannot forbear from setting down in this place, an observation of Mr. Bryant, which appears to me to be perfectly well founded: —"the Jews still remain: but how seldom is it that we can make a single proselyte! There is reason to think, that there were more converted by the apostles in one day, than have since been won over in the last thousand years."**

It was not yet known to the apostles, that they were at liberty to propose the religion to mankind at large. That "mystery," as Saint Paul calls it,* and as it then was, was revealed to Peter by an especial miracle. It appears to have been† about seven years after Christ's ascension, that the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles of Cesarea. A year after this, a great multitude of Gentiles were converted at Antioch in Syria. The expressions employed by the historian are these:—"A great number believed and turned to the Lord;" "much people was added unto the Lord;" "the apostles Barnabas and Paul taught much people."‡ Upon Herod's death, which happened in the next year,§ it is observed, that "the word of God grew and multiplied."‖ Three years from this time, upon the preaching of Paul at Iconium, the metropolis of Lycaonia, "a great multitude both of Jews and Greeks believed:"¶ and afterward, in the course of this very progress, he is represented as "making many disciples" at Derbe, a principal city in the same district. Three years** after this, which brings us to sixteen after the ascension, the apostles wrote a public letter from Jerusalem to the Gentile converts in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, with which letter Paul travelled through these countries, and found the churches "established in the faith, and increasing in number daily."†† From Asia the apostle proceeded into Greece, where soon after his arrival in Macedonia, we find him at Thessalonica; in which city, "some of the Jews believed, and of the devout Greeks a great multitude."‡‡ We meet also here with an accidental hint of the general progress of the Christian mission, in the exclamation of the tumultuous Jews of Thessalonica, "that they, who had turned the world upside down, were come thither also."§§ At Berea, the next city at which Paul arrives, the historian, who was present, informs us that "*many* of the Jews believed."‖‖ The next year and a half of Saint Paul's ministry was spent at Corinth. Of his success in that city, we receive the following intimations; "that *many* of the Corinthians believed and were baptized;" and "that it was revealed to the apostle by Christ, that he had *much* people in that city."¶¶ Within less than a year after his departure from Corinth, and twenty-five*** years after the ascension, Saint Paul fixed his station at Ephesus, for the space of two years††† and something more. The effect of his ministry in that city and neighbourhood drew from the historian a reflection, how "mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."‡‡‡ And at the conclusion of this period, we find Demetrius at the head of a party, who were alarmed by the progress of the religion, complaining, that "not only at Ephesus, but also throughout all Asia (*i. e.* the province of Lydia, and the country adjoining to Ephesus,) this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people."§§§ Beside these accounts, there occurs, incidentally, mention of converts at Rome, Alexandria, Athens, Cyprus, Cyrene, Macedonia, Philippi.

This is the third period in the propagation of Christianity, setting off in the seventh year after the ascension, and ending at the twenty-eighth.

perform. they were willing to hope, that God would accept this, and that He would excuse and forgive the rest."—Jortin's Dis. on the Chris. Rel p. 91. ed. 4.

* Acts v. 14. † Acts vi. 1.

‡ Vide Pearson's Antiq. l. xviii. c. 7. Benson's History of Christ, book i. p. 148.

§ Acts viii. 1. ‖ Ver. 4. ¶ Benson, book i. p. 207.

** Bryant on the Truth of the Christian Religion, p. 112.

* Eph. iii. 3—6.

† Benson's History of Christ, book ii. p. 236.

‡ Acts xi. 21, 24, 26. § Benson, book ii. p. 289.

‖ Acts xii. 24. ¶ Acts xiv. 1.

** Benson, book iii. p. 50. †† Acts xvi. 5.

‡‡ Acts xvii. 4. §§ Acts xvii. 6. ‖‖ Acts xvii. 12.

¶¶ Acts xviii. 8—10. *** Benson, book iii. p. 160.

††† Acts xix. 10. ‡‡‡ Acts xix. 20. §§§ Acts xix. 26.

Now lay these three periods together, and observe how the progress of the religion by these accounts is represented. The institution, which properly *began* only after its author's removal from the world, before the end of thirty years had spread itself through Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, almost all the numerous districts of the Lesser Asia, through Greece, and the Islands of the Ægean Sea, the sea-coast of Africa, and had extended itself to Rome, and into Italy. At Antioch in Syria, at Joppa, Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonica, Berea, Iconium, Derbe, Antioch in Pisidia, at Lydda, Saron, the number of converts is intimated by the expressions, "a great number," "great multitudes," "much people." Converts are mentioned, without any designation of their number,* at Tyre, Cesarea, Troas, Athens, Philippi, Lystra, Damascus.† During all this time, Jerusalem continued not only the centre of the mission, but a principal seat of the religion; for when Saint Paul turned thither at the conclusion of the period of which we are now considering the accounts, the other apostles pointed out to him, as a reason for his compliance with their advice, "how many thousands (myriads, ten thousands) there were in that city who believed."†

Upon this abstract, and the writing from which it is drawn, the following observations seem material to be made:

I. That the account comes from a person, who was himself concerned in a portion of what he relates, and was contemporary with the whole of it; who visited Jerusalem, and frequented the society of those who had acted, and were acting, the chief parts in the transaction. I lay down this point positively; for had the ancient attestations to this valuable record been less satisfactory than they are, the unaffectedness and simplicity with which the author notes his presence upon certain occasions, and the entire absence of art and design from these notices, would have been sufficient to persuade my mind, that whoever he was, he actually lived in the times, and occupied the situation, in which he represents himself to be. When I say, "whoever he was," I do not mean to cast a doubt upon the name to which antiquity hath ascribed the Acts of the Apostles (for there is no cause that I am acquainted with, for questioning it,) but to observe, that, in such a case as this, the time and situation of the author is of more importance than his name; and that *these* appear from the work itself, and in the most unsuspicious form.

II. That this account is a very *incomplete* account of the preaching and propagation of Christianity; I mean, that, if what we read in the history be true, much more than what the history contains must be true also. For although the narrative from which our information is derived, has been entitled the Acts of the Apostles, it is in fact a history of the twelve apostles only during a short time of their continuing together at Jerusalem; and even of this period the account is very concise. The work afterward consists of a few important passages of Peter's ministry, of the speech and death of Stephen, of the preaching of Philip the deacon; and the sequel of the volume, that is, two thirds of the whole, is taken up with the conversion, the travels, the discourses and history of the new apostle Paul; in which history, also, large portions of time are often passed over with very scanty notice.

III. That the account, so far as it goes, is for this very reason more credible. Had it been the author's design to have *displayed* the early progress of Christianity, he would undoubtedly have collected, or, at least, have set forth, accounts of the preaching of the rest of the apostles, who cannot, without extreme improbability, be supposed to have remained silent and inactive, or not to have met with a share of that success which attended their colleagues. To which may be added, as an observation of the same kind,

IV. That the intimations of the number of converts, and of the success of the preaching of the apostles, come out for the most part *incidentally;* are drawn from the historian by the occasion; such as the murmuring of the Grecian converts; the rest from persecution; Herod's death; the sending of Barnabas to Antioch, and Barnabas calling Paul to his assistance; Paul coming to a place, and finding there disciples; the clamour of the Jews; the complaint of artificers interested in the support of the popular religion; the reason assigned to induce Paul to give satisfaction to the Christians of Jerusalem. Had it not been for these occasions, it is probable that no notice whatever would have been taken of the number of converts in several of the passages in which that notice now appears. All this tends to remove the suspicion of a design to exaggerate or deceive.

Parallel testimonies with the history, are the letters of Saint Paul, and of the other apostles, which have come down to us. Those of Saint Paul are addressed to the churches of Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, the church of Galatia, and, if the inscription be right, of Ephesus; his ministry at all which places, is recorded in the history: to the church of Colosse, or rather to the churches of Colosse and Laodicea jointly, which he had not then visited. They recognise by reference the churches of Judea, the churches of Asia, and "all the churches of the Gentiles."* In the Epistle to the Romans,† the author is led to deliver a remarkable declaration concerning the extent of his preaching, its efficacy, and the cause to which he ascribes it,—"to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." In the Epistle to the Colossians,‡ we find an oblique but very strong signification of the then general state of the Christian mission, at least as it appeared to Saint Paul:—"If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and *which was preached to every creature which is under heaven;*" which Gospel, he had

* Considering the extreme conciseness of many parts of the history, the silence about the numbers of converts is no proof of their paucity; for at Philippi, no mention whatever is made of the number, yet Saint Paul addressed an epistle to that church. The churches of Galatia, and the affairs of those churches, were considerable enough to be the subject of another letter, and of much of Saint Paul's solicitude: yet no account is preserved in the history of his success, or even of his preaching in that country, except the slight notice which these words convey:—"When they had gone throughout Phrygia, and the region of Galatia—they essayed to go into Bithynia."—Acts xvi. 6.

† Acts xxi. 20.

* 1 Thess. ii. 14.

† Rom. xv. 18, 19.

‡ Col. i. 23.

reminded them near the beginning* of his letter, "was present with them, *as it was in all the world.*" The expressions are hyperbolical; but they are hyperboles which could only be used by a writer who entertained a strong sense of the subject. The First Epistle of Peter accosts the Christians dispersed throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

It comes next to be considered, how far these accounts are confirmed, or followed up by other evidence.

Tacitus, in delivering a relation, which has already been laid before the reader, of the fire which happened at Rome in the tenth year of Nero (which coincides with the thirtieth year after Christ's ascension,) asserts, that the emperor, in order to suppress the rumours of having been himself the author of the mischief, procured the Christians to be accused. Of which Christians, thus brought into his narrative, the following is so much of the historian's account as belongs to our present purpose: "They had their denomination from Christus, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, though checked for a while, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, but reached the city also. At first, they only were apprehended who confessed themselves of that sect; afterward *a vast multitude* were discovered by them." This testimony to the early propagation of Christianity is extremely material. It is from an historian of great reputation, living near the time; from a stranger and an enemy to the religion; and it joins immediately with the period through which the Scripture accounts extend. It establishes these points: that the religion began at Jerusalem; that it spread throughout Judea; that it had reached Rome, and not only so, but that it had there obtained a great number of converts. This was about six years after the time that Saint Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, and something more than two years after he arrived there himself. The converts to the religion were then so numerous at Rome, that, of those who were betrayed by the information of the persons first persecuted, a great multitude (multitudo ingens) were discovered and seized.

It seems probable, that the temporary check which Tacitus represents Christianity to have received (repressa in præsens) referred to the persecution at Jerusalem, which followed the death of Stephen, (Acts viii;) and which, by dispersing the converts, caused the institution, in some measure, to disappear. Its second eruption at the same place, and within a short time, has much in it of the character of truth. It was the firmness and perseverance of men, who knew what they relied upon.

Next in order of time, and perhaps superior in importance, is the testimony of Pliny the Younger. Pliny was the Roman governor of Pontus and Bithynia, two considerable districts in the northern part of Asia Minor. The situation in which he found his province, led him to apply to the emperor (Trajan) for his direction as to the conduct he was to hold towards the Christians. The letter in which this application is contained, was written not quite eighty years after Christ's ascension. The president, in this letter, states the measures he had already pursued, and then adds, as his reason for resorting to the emperor's counsel and authority, the following words:—"Suspending all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially on account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering: for, many of all ages, and of every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless it seemed to me, that it may be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims, likewise, are every where (passim) bought up; whereas, for some time, there were few to purchase them. Whence it is easy to imagine, that numbers of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those that shall repent."*

It is obvious to observe, that the passage of Pliny's letter, here quoted, proves, not only that the Christians in Pontus and Bithynia were now numerous, but that they had subsisted there for some considerable time. "It is certain," he says, "that the temples, which were almost forsaken (plainly ascribing this desertion of the popular worship to the prevalency of Christianity,) begin to be more frequented, and the sacred solemnities, after a *long* intermission, are revived." There are also two clauses in the former part of the letter which indicate the same thing; one, in which he declares that he had "never been present at any trials of Christians, and therefore knew not what was the usual subject of inquiry and punishment, or how far either was wont to be urged." The second clause is the following: "Others were named by an informer, who, at first, confessed themselves Christians, and afterward denied it; the rest said, they had been Christians, some three years ago, some longer, and some about twenty years." It is also apparent, that Pliny speaks of the Christians as a description of men well known to the person to whom he writes. His first sentence concerning them is, "I have never been present at the trials of Christians."

This mention of the name of Christians, without any preparatory explanation, shows that it was a term familiar both to the writer of the letter, and the person to whom it was addressed. Had it not been so, Pliny would naturally have begun his letter by informing the emperor, that he had met with a certain set of men in the province, called Christians.

Here then is a very singular evidence of the progress of the Christian religion in a short space. It was not fourscore years after the crucifixion of Jesus, when Pliny wrote this letter; nor seventy years since the apostles of Jesus began to mention his name to the Gentile world. Bithynia and Pontus were at a great distance from Judea, the centre from which the religion spread; yet in these provinces, Christianity had long subsisted, and Christians were now in such numbers as to lead the Roman governor to report to the emperor,

* Col. i. 6.

* C. Plin. Trajano Imp. lib. x. ep. xcvii.

that they were found not only in cities, but in villages and in open countries; of all ages, of every rank and condition; that they abounded so much, as to have produced a visible desertion of the temples; that beasts brought to market for victims, had few purchasers; that the sacred solemnities were much neglected:—circumstances noted by Pliny, for the express purpose of showing to the emperor the effect and prevalency of the new institution.

No evidence remains, by which it can be proved that the Christians were more numerous in Pontus and Bithynia than in other parts of the Roman empire; nor has any reason been offered to show why they should be so. Christianity did not begin in these countries, nor near them. I do not know, therefore, that we ought to confine the description in Pliny's letter to the state of Christianity in those provinces, even if no other account of the same subject had come down to us; but certainly, this letter may fairly be applied in aid and confirmation of the representations given of the general state of Christianity in the world, by Christian writers of that and the next succeeding age.

Justin Martyr, who wrote about thirty years after Pliny, and one hundred and six after the Ascension, has these remarkable words: "There is not a nation, either of Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes, and live in tents, amongst whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the Universe by the name of the crucified Jesus."* Tertullian, who comes about fifty years after Justin, appeals to the governors of the Roman empire in these terms: "We were but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities, islands, towns, and boroughs, the camp, the senate, and the forum. They (the heathen adversaries of Christianity) lament, that every sex, age, and condition, and persons of every rank also, are converts to that name."† I do allow, that these expressions are loose, and may be called declamatory. But even declamation hath its bounds: this public boasting upon a subject which must be known to every reader was not only useless but unnatural, unless the truth of the case, in a considerable degree, correspond with the description; at least, unless it had been both true and notorious, that great multitudes of Christians, of all ranks and orders, were to be found in most parts of the Roman empire. The same Tertullian, in another passage, by way of setting forth the extensive diffusion of Christianity, enumerates as belonging to Christ, beside many other countries, the "Moors and Gætulians of Africa, the borders of Spain, several nations of France, and parts of Britain, inaccessible to the Romans, the Samaritans, Daci, Germans, and Scythians;"‡ and, which is more material than the extent of the institution, the *number* of Christians in the several countries in which it prevailed, is thus expressed by him: "Although so great a multitude, that in almost every city we form the greater part, we pass our time modestly and in silence.§ Clemens Alexandrinus, who preceded Tertullian by a few years, introduces a comparison between the success of Christianity and that of the most celebrated philosophical institutions: "The philosophers were confined to Greece, and to their particular retainers; but the doctrine of the Master of Christianity did not remain in Judea, as philosophy did in Greece, but it spread throughout the whole world, in every nation, and village, and city, both of Greeks and Barbarians, converting both whole houses and separate individuals, having already brought over to the truth not a few of the philosophers themselves. If the Greek philosophy be prohibited, it immediately vanishes; whereas, from the first preaching of *our* doctrine, kings and tyrants, governors and presidents, with their whole train, and with the populace on their side, have endeavoured with their whole might to exterminate it, yet doth it flourish more and more.* Origen, who follows Tertullian at the distance of only thirty years, delivers nearly the same account: "In every part of the world (says he,) throughout all Greece, and in all other nations, there are innumerable and immense multitudes, who, having left the laws of their country, and those whom they esteemed gods, have given themselves up to the law of Moses, and the religion of Christ: and this not without the bitterest resentment from the idolaters, by whom they were frequently put to torture, and sometimes to death: and it is wonderful to observe, how, in so short a time, the religion has increased, amidst punishment and death, and every kind of torture."† In another passage, Origen draws the following candid comparison between the state of Christianity in his time, and the condition of its more primitive ages: "By the good providence of God, the Christian religion has so flourished and increased continually, that it is now preached freely without molestation, although there were a thousand obstacles to the spreading of the doctrine of Jesus in the world. But as it was the will of God that the Gentiles should have the benefit of it, all the counsels of men against the Christians were defeated: and by how much the more emperors and governors of provinces, and the people every where, strove to depress them; so much the more have they increased, and prevailed exceedingly."‡

It is well known, that within less than eighty years after this, the Roman empire became Christian under Constantine: and it is probable that Constantine declared himself on the side of the Christians, because they were the powerful party; for Arnobius, who wrote immediately before Constantine's accession, speaks of the whole world as filled with Christ's doctrine, of its diffusion throughout all countries, of an innumerable body of Christians in distant provinces, of the strange revolution of opinion of men of the greatest genius, orators, grammarians, rhetoricians, lawyers, physicians, having come over to the institution, and that also in the face of threats, executions, and tortures.§ And not more than twenty years after Constantine's entire possession of the empire, Julius Firmicus Maternus calls upon the emperors Constantius and Constans to extirpate the relics of the ancient religion; the reduced and fallen condition of which is described by our author in the following words: "Licèt adhuc in quibusdam regionibus idololatriæ morientia palpi-

* Diad. cum Tryph.
† Tertull. Apol. c. 37.
‡ Ad. Jud. c. 7.
§ Ad. Scap. c. 111.

* Clem. Al. Strum. lib. vi. ad fin.
† Orig. in Cels. lib. I. ‡ Orig. cont. Cels. lib. vii.
§ Arnob. in Gentes, l. i. p. 27. 9. 24. 42. 44. edit. Lug. Bat. 1650.

tent membra; tamen in eo reo est, ut à Christianis omnibus terris pestiferum hoc malum funditùs amputetur:" and in another place, "Modicum tantum superest, ut legibus vestris—extincta idolatriæ pereat funesta contagio."* It will not be thought that we quote this writer in order to recommend his temper or his judgment, but to show the comparative state of Christianity and of Heathenism at this period. Fifty years afterward, Jerome represents the decline of Paganism in language which conveys the same idea of its approaching extinction: "Solitudinem patitur et in urbe gentilitas. Dii quondam nationam, cum bubonibus et noctuis, in solis culminibus remanserunt."† Jerome here indulges a triumph, natural and allowable in a zealous friend of the cause, but which could only be suggested to his mind by the consent and universality with which he saw the religion received. "But now (says he) the passion and resurrection of Christ are celebrated in the discourses and writings of all nations. I need not mention, Jews, Greeks, and Latins. The Indians, Persians, Goths, and Egyptians, philosophize, and firmly believe the immortality of the soul, and future recompenses, which, before, the greatest philosophers had denied, or doubted of, or perplexed with their disputes. The fierceness of Thracians and Scythians is now softened by the gentle sound of the Gospel; and every where Christ is all in all."‡ Were therefore the motives of Constantine's conversion ever so problematical, the easy establishment of Christianity, and the ruin of Heathenism, under him and his immediate successors, is of itself a proof of the progress which Christianity had made in the preceding period. It may be added also, "that Maxentius, the rival of Constantine, had shown himself friendly to the Christians. Therefore of those who were contending for worldly power and empire, one actually favoured and flattered them, and another may be suspected to have joined himself to them, partly from consideration of interest: so considerable were they become, under external disadvantages of all sorts."§ This at least is certain, that throughout the whole transaction hitherto, the great seemed to follow, not to lead, the public opinion.

It may help to convey to us some notion of the extent and progress of Christianity, or rather of the character and quality of many early Christians, of their learning and their labours, to notice the number of Christian *writers* who flourished in these ages. Saint Jerome's catalogue contains *sixty-six* writers within the first three centuries, and the first six years of the fourth; and *fifty-four* between that time and his own, *viz.* A. D. 392. Jerome introduces his catalogue with the following just remonstrance:—"Let those who say the church has had no philosophers, nor eloquent and learned men, observe who and what they were who founded, established, and adorned it: let them cease to accuse our faith of rusticity, and confess their mistake."‖ Of these writers, several, as Justin, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Bardesanes, Hippolitus, Eusebius, were voluminous writers. Christian writers abounded particularly about the year 178. Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, founded a library in that city, A. D. 212. Pamphilus, the friend of Origen, founded a library at Cesarea, A. D. 294. Public defences were also set forth, by various advocates of the religion, in the course of its first three centuries. Within one hundred years after Christ's ascension, Quadratus and Aristides, whose works, except some few fragments of the first, are lost; and, about twenty years afterward, Justin Martyr, whose works remain, presented apologies for the Christian religion to the Roman emperors; Quadratus and Aristides to Adrian, Justin to Antoninus Pius, and a second to Marcus Antoninus. Melito, bishop of Sardis, and Apollinaris, bishop of Hierapolis, and Miltiades, men of great reputation, did the same to Marcus Antoninus, twenty years afterward:* and ten years after this, Apollonius, who suffered martyrdom under the emperor Commodus, composed an apology for his faith, which he read in the senate, and which was afterward published.† Fourteen years after the apology of Apollonius, Tertullian addressed the work which now remains under that name to the governors of provinces in the Roman empire; and, about the same time, Minucius Felix composed a defence of the Christian religion, which is still extant; and shortly after the conclusion of this century, copious defences of Christianity were published by Arnobius and Lactantius.

* De Error. Profan. Relig. c. xxi. p. 172, quoted by Lardner, vol. viii. p. 262.
† Jer. ad Lect. ep. 5, 7. ‡ Jer. ep. 8. ad Heliod.
§ Lardner, Cred. vol. vii. p. 380.
‖ Jer. Prol. in Lib. de Scr. Eccl.

* Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. c. 26. See also Lardner, vol. ii. p. 666.
† Lardner, vol. ii. p. 687.

SECTION II.

Reflections upon the preceding account.

In viewing the progress of Christianity, our first attention is due to the number of converts at Jerusalem, immediately after its Founder's death; because this success was a success at the *time*, and upon the *spot*, when and where the chief part of the history had been transacted.

We are, in the next place, called upon to attend to the early establishment of numerous Christian societies in Judea and Galilee; which countries had been the scene of Christ's miracles and ministry, and where the memory of what had passed, and the knowledge of what was alleged, must have yet been fresh and certain.

We are, thirdly, invited to recollect the success of the apostles and of their companions, at the several places to which they came, both within and without Judea; because it was the credit given to original witnesses, appealing for the truth of their accounts to what themselves had seen and heard. The effect also of their preaching strongly confirms the truth of what our history positively and circumstantially relates, that they were able to exhibit to their hearers supernatural attestations of their mission.

We are, lastly, to consider the *subsequent* growth and spread of the religion, of which we receive successive intimations, and satisfactory, though general and occasional, accounts, until its full and final establishment.

In all these several stages, the history is without a parallel: for it must be observed, that we have

not now been tracing the progress, and describing the prevalency, of an opinion, founded upon philosophical or critical arguments, upon mere deduction of reason, or the construction of ancient writings; (of which kind are the several theories which have, at different times, gained possession of the public mind in various departments of science and literature; and of one or other of which kind are the tenets also which divide the various sects of Christianity;) but that we speak of a system, the very basis and postulatum of which was a supernatural character ascribed to a particular person; of a doctrine, the truth whereof depends entirely upon the truth of a matter of fact then recent. "To establish a new religion, even amongst a few people, or in one single nation, is a thing in itself exceedingly difficult. To reform some corruptions which may have spread in a religion, or to make new regulations in it, is not perhaps so hard, when the main and principal part of that religion is preserved entire and unshaken; and yet this very often cannot be accomplished without an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, and may be attempted a thousand times without success. But to introduce a new faith, a new way of thinking and acting, and to persuade many nations to quit the religion in which their ancestors have lived and died, which had been delivered down to them from time immemorial, to make them forsake and despise the deities which they had been accustomed to reverence and worship; this is a work of still greater difficulty.* The resistance of education, worldly policy, and superstition, is almost invincible."

If men, in these days, be Christians in consequence of their education, in submission to authority, or in compliance with fashion, let us recollect that the very contrary of this, at the beginning, was the case. The first race of Christians, as well as millions who succeeded them, became such in formal opposition to all these motives, to the whole power and strength of this influence. Every argument, therefore, and every instance, which sets forth the prejudice of education, and the almost irresistible effects of that prejudice (and no persons are more fond of expatiating upon this subject than deistical writers,) in fact confirms the evidence of Christianity.

But, in order to judge of the argument which is drawn from the early propagation of Christianity, I know no fairer way of proceeding, than to compare what we have seen on the subject, with the success of Christian missions in modern ages. In the East India mission, supported by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, we hear sometimes of thirty, sometimes of forty, being baptized in the course of a year, and these principally children. Of converts properly so called, that is, of adults voluntarily embracing Christianity, the number is extremely small. "Notwithstanding the labour of missionaries for upwards of two hundred years, and the establishments of different Christian nations who support them, there are not twelve thousand Indian Christians, and those almost entirely outcasts."†

I lament, as much as any man, the little progress which Christianity has made in these countries, and the inconsiderable effect that has followed the labours of its missionaries: but I see in it a strong proof of the Divine origin of the religion. What had the apostles to assist them in propagating Christianity which the missionaries have not? If piety and zeal had been sufficient, I doubt not but that our missionaries possess these qualities in a high degree: for, nothing except piety and zeal could engage them in the undertaking. If sanctity of life and manners was the allurement, the conduct of these men is unblamable. If the advantage of education and learning be looked to, there is not one of the modern missionaries, who is not, in this respect, superior to all the apostles: and that not only absolutely, but, what is of more importance, *relatively*, in comparison, that is, with those amongst whom they exercise their office. If the intrinsic excellency of the religion, the perfection of its morality, the purity of its precepts, the eloquence or tenderness or sublimity of various parts of its writings, were the recommendations by which it made its way, these remain the same. If the character and circumstances, under which the preachers were introduced to the countries in which they taught, be accounted of importance, this advantage is all on the side of the modern missionaries. They come from a country and a people to which the Indian world look up with sentiments of deference. The apostles came forth amongst the Gentiles under no other name than that of Jews, which was precisely the character they despised and derided. If it be disgraceful in India to become a Christian, it could not be much less so to be enrolled amongst those, "quos per flagitia invisos, vulgus Christianos appellabat." If the religion which they had to encounter be considered, the difference, I apprehend, will not be great. The theology of both was nearly the same: "what is supposed to be performed by the power of Jupiter, of Neptune, of Æolus, of Mars, of Venus, according to the mythology of the West, is ascribed, in the East, to the agency of Agrio the god of fire, Varoon the god of oceans, Vayoo the god of wind, Cama the god of love."* The sacred rites of the Western Polytheism were gay, festive, and licentious; the rites of the public religion in the East partake of the same character, with a more avowed indecency. "In every function performed in the pagodas, as well as in every public procession, it is the office of these women (*i. e.* of women prepared by the Brahmins for the purpose,) to dance before the idol, and to sing hymns in his praise; and it is difficult to say whether they trespass most against decency by the gestures they exhibit, or by the verses which they recite. The walls of the pagodas were covered with paintings in a style no less indelicate."†

On both sides of the comparison, the popular religion had a strong establishment. In ancient Greece and Rome, it was strictly incorporated with the state. The magistrate was the priest. The highest officers of government bore the most distinguished part in the celebration of the public rites. In India, a powerful and numerous cast possess exclusively the administration of the esta-

* Jortin's Dis. on the Christ. Rel. p. 107. ed. iv.

† Sketches relating to the history, learning, and manners of the Hindoos, p. 48; quoted by Dr. Robertson, Hist. Dis. concerning ancient India, p. 236.

* Baghvat Geeta, p. 94, quoted by Dr. Robertson, Ind. Dis. p. 306.

† Others of the deities of the East are of an austere and gloomy character, to be propitiated by victims, sometimes by human sacrifices, and by voluntary torments of the most excruciating kind.—Voyage de Gentil, vol. i. p. 244—260. Preface to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 57, quoted by Dr. Robertson, p. 329.

blished worship; and are, of consequence, devoted to the service, and attached to its interest. In both, the prevailing mythology was destitute of any proper evidence: or rather, in both, the origin of the tradition is run up into ages long anterior to the existence of credible history, or of written language. The Indian chronology computes eras by millions of years, and the life of man by thousands;* and in these, or prior to these, is placed the history of their divinities. In both, the established superstition held the same place in the public opinion; that is to say, in both it was credited by the bulk of the people,† but by the learned and philosophical part of the community, either derided, or regarded by them as only fit to be upholden for the sake of its political uses.‡

Or if it should be allowed, that the ancient heathens believed in their religion less generally than the present Indians do, I am far from thinking that this circumstance would afford any facility to the work of the apostles, above that of the modern missionaries. To me it appears, and I think it material to be remarked, that a disbelief of the established religion of their country has no tendency to dispose men for the reception of another; but that, on the contrary, it generates a settled contempt of all religious pretensions whatever. General infidelity is the hardest soil which the propagators of a new religion can have to work upon. Could a Methodist or Moravian promise himself a better chance of success with a French *esprit fort*, who had been accustomed to laugh at the popery of his country than with a believing Mahometan or Hindoo? Or are our modern unbelievers in Christianity, for that reason, in danger of becoming Mahometans or Hindoos? It does not appear that the Jews, who had a body of historical evidence to offer for their religion, and who at that time undoubtedly entertained and held forth the expectation of a future state, derived any great advantage, as to the extension of their system, from the discredit into which the popular religion had fallen with many of their heathen neighbours.

We have particularly directed our observations to the state and progress of Christianity amongst the inhabitants of *India:* but the history of the Christian mission in other countries, where the efficacy of the mission is left solely to the conviction wrought by the preaching of strangers, presents the same idea, as the Indian mission does, of the feebleness and inadequacy of human means. About twenty-five years ago, was published in England a translation from the Dutch, of a History of Greenland, and a relation of the mission for above thirty years carried on in that country by the Unitas Fratrum, or Moravians. Every part of that relation confirms the opinion we have stated. Nothing could surpass, or hardly equal, the zeal and patience of the missionaries. Yet their historian, in the conclusion of his narrative, could find place for no reflections more encouraging than the following:—"A person that had known the heathen, that had seen the little benefit from the great pains hitherto taken with them, and considered that one after another had abandoned all hopes of the conversion of those infidels (and some thought they would never be converted, till they saw miracles wrought as in the apostles' days, and this the Greenlanders expected and demanded of their instructors;) one that considered this, I say, would not so much wonder at the past unfruitfulness of these young beginners, as at their steadfast perseverance in the midst of nothing but distress, difficulties, and impediments, internally and externally; and that they never desponded of the conversion of those poor creatures amidst all seeming impossibilities."*

From the widely disproportionate effects which attend the preaching of modern missionaries of Christianity, compared with what followed the ministry of Christ and his apostles under circumstances either alike, or not so unlike as to account for the difference, a conclusion is fairly drawn, in support of what our histories deliver concerning them, *viz.* that they possessed means of conviction, which we have not; that they had proofs to appeal to, which we want.

SECTION III.

Of the Religion of Mahomet.

THE only event in the history of the human species which admits of comparison with the propagation of Christianity, is the success of Mahometanism. The Mahometan institution was rapid in its progress, was recent in its history, and was founded upon a supernatural or prophetic character assumed by its author. In these articles, the resemblance with Christianity is confessed. But there are points of difference, which separate, we apprehend, the two cases entirely.

1. Mahomet did not found his pretensions upon miracles, properly so called; that is, upon proofs of supernatural agency, capable of being known and attested by others. Christians are warranted in this assertion by the evidence of the Koran, in

* "The Suffee Jogue, or age of purity, is said to have lasted three millions two hundred thousand years; and they hold that the life of man was extended in that age to one hundred thousand years; but there is a difference amongst the Indian writers, of six millions of years in the computation of this era."—Preface to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 57, quoted by Dr. Robertson, p. 320.

† "How absurd soever the articles of faith may be, which superstition has adopted, or how unhallowed the rites which it prescribes, the former are received, in every age and country, with unhesitating assent, by the great body of the people, and the latter observed with scrupulous exactness. In our reasonings concerning opinions and practices which differ widely from our own, we are extremely apt to err. Having been instructed ourselves in the principles of a religion, worthy in every respect of that Divine wisdom by which they were dictated, we frequently express wonder at the credulity of nations, in embracing systems of belief which appear to us so directly repugnant to right reason; and sometimes suspect, that tenets so wild and extravagant do not really gain credit with them. But experience may satisfy us, that neither our wonder nor suspicions are well founded. No article of the public religion was called in question by those people of ancient Europe with whose history we are best acquainted; and no practice, which it enjoined, appeared improper to them. On the other hand, every opinion that tended to diminish the reverence of men for the gods of their country, or to alienate them from their worship, excited, among the Greeks and Romans, that indignant zeal which is natural to every people attached to their religion by a firm persuasion of its truth."—Ind. Dis. p. 321.

‡ That the learned Brahmins of the East are rational Theists, and secretly reject the established theory, and contemn the rites that were founded upon them, or rather consider them as contrivances to be supported for their political uses, see Dr. Robertson's Ind. Dis. p. 324. —334.

* History of Greenland, vol. ii. p. 376.

which Mahomet not only does not affect the power of working miracles, but expressly disclaims it. The following passages of that book furnish direct proofs of the truth of what we allege:—"The infidels say, Unless a sign be sent down unto him from his lord, we will not believe; thou art a preacher only."* Again; "Nothing hindered us from sending *thee* with miracles, except that the former nations have charged them with imposture."† And lastly; "They say, unless a sign be sent down unto him from his lord, we will not believe: Answer; Signs are in the power of God alone, and I am no more than a public preacher. Is it not sufficient for them, that we have sent down unto them the book of the Koran to be read unto them?"‡ Besides these acknowledgments, I have observed *thirteen* distinct places, in which Mahomet puts the objection (unless a sign, &c.) into the mouth of the unbeliever, in not one of which does he allege a miracle in reply. His answer is, "that God giveth the power of working miracles, when and to whom he pleaseth;"§ "that if he should work miracles, they would not believe;"‖ "that they had before rejected Moses, and the Prophets, who wrought miracles;"¶ "that the Koran itself was a miracle."**

The only place in the Koran in which it can be pretended that a sensible miracle is referred to (for I do not allow the secret visitations of Gabriel, the night journey of Mahomet to heaven, or the presence in battle of invisible hosts of angels, to deserve the name of *sensible* miracles,) is the beginning of the fifty-fourth chapter. The words are these:—"The hour of judgment approacheth, *and the moon hath been split in sunder;* but if the unbelievers see a sign, they turn aside saying, This is a powerful charm." The Mahometan expositors disagree in their interpretation of this passage; some explaining it to be a mention of the splitting of the moon, as one of the future signs of the approach of the day of judgment; others referring it to a miraculous appearance which had then taken place.†† It seems to me not improbable, that Mahomet might have taken advantage of some extraordinary halo, or other unusual appearance of the moon, which had happened about this time; and which supplied a foundation both for this passage, and for the story which in after times had been raised out of it.

After this more than silence, after these authentic *confessions* of the Koran, we are not to be moved with miraculous stories related of Mahomet by Abulfeda, who wrote his life, about six hundred years after his death; or which are found in the legend of Al-Janabi, who came two hundred years later.‡‡ On the contrary, from comparing what Mahomet himself wrote and said, with what was afterwards reported of him by his followers, the plain and fair conclusion is, that when the religion was established by conquest, then, and not till then, came out the stories of his miracles.

Now this difference alone constitutes, in my opinion, a bar to all reasoning from one case to the other. The success of a religion founded upon a miraculous history, shows the credit which was given to the history; and this credit, under the circumstances in which it was given, *i. e.* by persons capable of knowing the truth, and interested to inquire after it, is evidence of the reality of the history, and, by consequence, of the truth of the religion. Where a miraculous history is not alleged, no part of this argument can be applied. We admit, that multitudes acknowledge the pretensions of Mahomet; but, these pretensions being destitute of miraculous evidence, we know that the grounds upon which they were acknowledged, could not be secure grounds of persuasion to his followers, nor their example any authority to us. Admit the whole of Mahomet's authentic history, so far as it was of a nature, capable of being known or witnessed by others, to be true (which is certainly to admit all that the reception of the religion can be brought to prove,) and Mahomet might still be an impostor, or enthusiast, or a union of both. Admit to be true almost any part of Christ's history, of that I mean, which was public, and within the cognizance of his followers, and he must have come from God. Where matter of fact is not in question, where miracles are not alleged, I do not see that the progress of a religion is a better argument of its truth, than the prevalency of any system of opinions in natural religion, morality, or physics, is a proof of the truth of those opinions. And we know that this sort of argument is inadmissible in any branch of philosophy whatever.

But it will be said, If one religion could make its way without miracles, why might not another? To which I reply, first, that this is not the question; the proper question is not, whether a religious institution could be set up without miracles, but whether a religion or a change of religion, founding itself in miracles, could succeed without any reality to rest upon? I apprehend these two cases to be very different; and I apprehend Mahomet's not taking this course, to be one proof, amongst others, that the thing is difficult, if not impossible, to be accomplished; certainly it was not from an unconsciousness of the value and importance of miraculous evidence: for it is very observable, that in the same volume, and sometimes in the same chapters, in which Mahomet so repeatedly disclaims the power of working miracles himself, he is incessantly referring to the miracles of preceding prophets. One would imagine, to hear some men talk, or to read some books, that the setting up of a religion by dint of miraculous pretences was a thing of every day's experience; whereas I believe, that, except the Jewish and Christian religion, there is no tolerably well authenticated account of any such thing having been accomplished.

II. The establishment of Mahomet's religion was effected by causes which in no degree appertained to the origin of Christianity.

During the first twelve years of his mission, Mahomet had recourse only to persuasion. This is allowed. And there is sufficient reason from the effect to believe, that, if he had confined himself to this mode of propagating his religion, we of the present day should never have heard either

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* Sale's Koran, c. xiii. p. 201. ed. quarto.
† Ch. xvii. p. 232.
‡ Ch. xxix. p. 328.
§ Ch. v. x. xiii. twice.
‖ Ch. vi.
¶ Ch. iii. xxi. xxviii.
** Ch. xvi.
†† Vide Sale, in loc.
‡‡ It does not, I think, appear, that these historians had any written accounts to appeal to, more ancient than the Sonnah; which was a collection of traditions made by order of the caliphs two hundred years after Mahomet's death. Mahomet died A. D. 632; Al Bochari, one of the six doctors who compiled the Sonnah, was born A. D. 809; died in 869.—Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, p. 192. ed. 7th.

of him or it. "Three years were silently employed in the conversion of *fourteen* proselytes. For ten years, the religion advanced with a slow and painful progress, within the walls of Mecca. The number of proselytes in the seventh year of his mission may be estimated by the absence of *eighty-three* men and eighteen women, who retired to Ethiopia."* Yet this progress, such as it was, appears to have been aided by some very important advantages which Mahomet found in his situation, in his mode of conducting his design, and in his doctrine.

1. Mahomet was the grandson of the most powerful and honourable family in Mecca: and although the early death of his father had not left him a patrimony suitable to his birth, he had, long before the commencement of his mission, repaired this deficiency by an opulent marriage. A person considerable by his wealth, of high descent, and nearly allied to the chiefs of his country, taking upon himself the character of a religious teacher, would not fail of attracting attention and followers.

2. Mahomet conducted his design, in the outset especially, with great art and prudence. He conducted it as a politician would conduct a plot. His first application was to his own family. This gained him his wife's uncle, a considerable person in Mecca, together with his cousin Ali, afterward the celebrated Caliph, then a youth of great expectation, and even already distinguished by his attachment, impetuosity, and courage.† He next expressed himself to Abu Beer, a man amongst the first of the Koreish in wealth and influence. The interest and example of Abu Beer, drew in five other principal persons in Mecca; whose solicitations prevailed upon five more of the same rank. This was the work of three years; during which time, every thing was transacted in secret. Upon the strength of these allies, and under the powerful protection of his family, who, however some of them might disapprove his enterprise, or deride his pretensions, would not suffer the orphan of their house, the relic of their favourite brother to be insulted; Mahomet now commenced his public preaching. And the advance which he made during the nine or ten remaining years of his peaceable ministry, was by no means greater than what, with these advantages, and with the additional and singular circumstance of their being no *established* religion at Mecca at that time to contend with, might reasonably have been expected. How soon his primitive adherents were let into the secret of his views of empire, or in what stage of his undertaking these views first opened themselves to his own mind, it is not now easy to determine. The event however was, that these his first proselytes all ultimately attained to riches and honours, to the command of armies, and the government of kingdoms.‡

3. The Arabs deduced their descent from Abraham through the line of Ishmael. The inhabitants of Mecca, in common probably with the other Arabian tribes, acknowledged, as, I think, may clearly be collected from the Koran, one supreme Deity, but had associated with him many objects of idolatrous worship. The great doctrine with which Mahomet set out, was the strict and exclusive unity of God. Abraham, he told them, their illustrious ancestor; Ishmael, the father of their nation; Moses, the lawgiver of the Jews; and Jesus, the author of Christianity; had all asserted the same thing: that their followers had universally corrupted the truth, and that *he* was now commissioned to restore it to the world. Was it to be wondered at, that a doctrine so specious, and authorized by names, some or other of which were holden in the highest veneration by every description of his hearers, should in the hands of a popular missionary, prevail to the extent in which Mahomet succeeded by his pacific ministry?

4. Of the institution which Mahomet joined with this fundamental doctrine, and of the Koran in which that institution is delivered, we discover, I think, two purposes that pervade the whole, *viz.* to make converts, and to make his converts soldiers. The following particulars, amongst others, may be considered as pretty evident indications of these designs:

1. When Mahomet began to preach, his address to the Jews, to the Christians, and to the Pagan Arabs, was, that the religion which he taught, was no other than what had been originally their own.—"We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down unto us, and that which hath been sent down unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which was delivered unto Moses and Jesus, and that which was delivered unto the prophets from their Lord: we make no distinction between any of them."* "He hath ordained you the religion which he commanded Noah, and which we have revealed unto thee, O Mohammed, and which we commanded Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus, saying, Observe this religion, and be not divided therein."† "He hath chosen you, and hath not imposed on you any difficulty in the religion which he hath given you, the religion of your father Abraham."‡

2. The author of the Koran never ceases from describing the future anguish of unbelievers, their despair, regret, penitence, and torment. It is the point which he labours above all others. And these descriptions are conceived in terms, which will appear in no small degree impressive, even to the modern reader of an English translation. Doubtless they would operate with much greater force upon the minds of those to whom they were immediately directed. The terror which they seem well calculated to inspire, would be to many tempers a powerful application.

3. On the other hand; his voluptuous paradise; his robes of silk, his palaces of marble, his rivers and shades, his groves and couches, his wines, his dainties; and above all, his seventy-two virgins assigned to each of the faithful, of resplendent beauty and eternal youth; intoxicated the imaginations, and seized the passions of his Eastern followers.

4. But Mahomet's highest heaven was reserved for those who fought his battles, or expended

* Gibbon's Hist. vol. ix. p. 244, &c.; ed. Dub.

† Of which Mr. Gibbon has preserved the following specimen—"When Mahomet called out in an assembly of his family, Who among you will be my companion and my vizir? Ali, then only in the fourteenth year of his age, suddenly replied, O prophet! I am the man;—whosoever rises against thee, I will dash out his teeth, tear out his eyes, break his legs, rip up his belly. O prophet! I will be thy vizir over them."—Vol. ix. p. 245.

‡ Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 244.

* Sale's Koran, c. ii. p. 17. † Ib. c. xlii. p. 393.

‡ Ib. c. xxii. p. 281.

their fortunes in his cause.—"Those believers who sit still at home, not having any hurt, and those who employ their fortunes and their persons for the religion of God, shall not be held equal. God hath preferred those who employ their fortunes and their persons in that cause, to a degree above those who sit at home. God hath indeed promised every one Paradise; but God hath preferred those who *fight for the faith* before those who sit still, by adding unto them a great reward; by degree of honour conferred upon them from him, and by granting them forgiveness and mercy."* Again; "Do ye reckon the giving drink to the pilgrims, and the visiting of the holy temple, to be actions as meritorious as those performed by him who believeth in God and the last day, and *fighteth for the religion of God?* They shall not be held equal with God.—They who have believed and fled their country, and employed their substance and their persons in the defence of God's true religion, shall be in the highest degree of honour with God; and these are they who shall be happy. The Lord sendeth them good tidings of mercy from him, and good will, and of gardens wherein they shall enjoy lasting pleasures. They shall continue therein for ever; for with God is a great reward."† And once more; "Verily God hath purchased of the true believers their souls and their substance, promising them the enjoyment of Paradise, on condition that they *fight for the cause of God;* whether they slay or be slain, the promise for the same is assuredly due by the Law and the Gospel and the Koran."‡§

5. His doctrine of predestination was applicable, and was applied by him, to the same purpose of fortifying and of exalting the courage of his adherents.—"If any thing of the matter had happened unto us, we had not been slain here. Answer: If ye had been in your houses, verily they would have gone forth to fight, whose slaughter was decreed to the places where they died."‖

6. In warm regions, the appetite of the sexes is ardent, the passion for inebriating liquors moderate. In compliance with this distinction, although Mahomet laid a restraint upon the drinking of wine, in the use of women he allowed an almost unbounded indulgence. Four wives, with the liberty of changing them at pleasure,¶ together with the persons of all his captives,** was an irresistible bribe to on Arabian warrior. "God is minded (says he, speaking of this very subject) to make his religion light unto you; for man was created weak." How different this from the unaccommodating purity of the Gospel! How would Mahomet have succeeded with the Christian lesson in his mouth,—"Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart?" It must be added, that Mahomet did not enter upon the prohibition of wine, till the fourth year of the Hegira, or seventeenth of his mission,* when his military successes had completely established his authority. The same observation holds of the fast of the Ramadan,† and of the most laborious part of his institution, the pilgrimage to Mecca.‡

What has hitherto been collected from the records of the Mussulman history, relates to the twelve or thirteen years of Mahomet's peaceable preaching; which part alone of his life and enterprise admits of the smallest comparison with the origin of Christianity. A new scene is now unfolded. The city of Medina, distant about ten days' journey from Mecca, was at that time distracted by the hereditary contentions of two hostile tribes. These feuds were exasperated by the mutual persecutions of the Jews and Christians, and of the different Christian sects by which the city was inhabited.§ The religion of Mahomet presented, in some measure, a point of union or compromise to these divided opinions. It embraced the principles which were common to them all. Each party saw in it an honourable acknowledgment of the fundamental truth of their own system. To the Pagan Arab, somewhat imbued with the sentiments and knowledge of his Jewish or Christian fellow-citizens, it offered no offensive, or very improbable theology. This recommendation procured to Mahometanism a more favourable reception at Medina, than its author had been able, by twelve years' painful endeavours, to obtain for it at Mecca. Yet, after all, the progress of the religion was inconsiderable. His missionary could only collect a congregation of forty persons.‖ It was not a religious, but a political association, which ultimately introduced Mahomet into Medina. Harassed, as it should seem, and disgusted by the long continuance of factions and disputes, the inhabitants of that city saw in the admission of the prophet's authority, a rest from the miseries which they had suffered, and a suppression of the violence and fury which they had learned to condemn. After an embassy, therefore, composed of believers and unbelievers,¶ and of persons of both tribes, with whom a treaty was concluded of strict alliance and support, Mahomet made his public entry, and was received as the sovereign of Medina.

From this time, or soon after this time, the impostor changed his language and his conduct. Having now a town at his command, where to arm his party, and to head them with security, he enters upon new counsels. He now pretends that a divine commission is given him to attack the infidels, to destroy idolatry, and to set up the true faith by the sword.** An early victory over a very superior force, achieved by conduct and bravery, established the renown of his arms, and of his personal character.†† Every year after this was marked by battles or assassinations. The nature and activity of Mahomet's future exertions may be estimated from the computation, that, in the nine following years of his life, he commanded

* Sale's Koran, c. iv. p. 73. † Ib. c. ix. p. 151.
‡ Ib. c. ix p. 164.
§ "The sword (saith Mahomet) is the key of heaven and of hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months' fasting or prayer. Whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven at the day of judgment; his wounds shall be resplendent as vermillion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim."—Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 256.
‖ Sale's Koran, c. iii. p. 54. ¶ Ib. c. iv. p. 63.
** Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 225.

* Mod. Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 126. † Ib. p. 112.
‡ This latter, however, already prevailed amongst the Arabs, and had grown out of their excessive veneration for the Caaba. Mahomet's law, in this respect, was rather a compliance than an innovation.—Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 122.
§ Mod Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 100. ‖ Ib. p. 85. ¶ Ibid.
** Ib. vol. i. p. 88. †† Vict. of Bedr, ib. p. 106.

his army in person in eight general engagements,* and undertook, by himself or his lieutenants, fifty military enterprises.

From this time we have nothing left to account for, but that Mahomet should collect an army, that his army should conquer, and that his religion should proceed together with his conquests. The ordinary experience of human affairs, leaves us little to wonder at, in any of these effects: and they were likewise each assisted by peculiar facilities. From all sides, the roving Arabs crowded round the standard of religion and plunder, of freedom and victory, of arms and rapine. Beside the highly painted joys of a carnal paradise, Mahomet rewarded his followers in this world with a liberal division of the spoils, and with the persons of their female captives.† The condition of Arabia, occupied by small independent tribes, exposed it to the impression, and yielded to the progress, of a firm and resolute army. After the reduction of his native peninsula, the weakness also of the Roman provinces on the north and the west, as well as the distracted state of the Persian empire on the east, facilitated the successful invasion of neighbouring countries. That Mahomet's conquests should carry his religion along with them, will excite little surprise, when we know the conditions which he proposed to the vanquished. Death or conversion was the only choice offered to idolaters. "Strike off their heads! strike off all the ends of their fingers!‡ kill the idolaters wheresoever ye shall find them!"§ To the Jews and Christians was left the somewhat milder alternative of subjection and tribute, if they persisted in their own religion, or of an equal participation in the rights and liberties, the honours and privileges, of the faithful, if they embraced the religion of their conquerors. "Ye Christian dogs, you know your option, the Koran, the tribute, or the sword."‖ The corrupted state of Christianity in the seventh century, and the contentions of its sects, unhappily so fell in with men's care of their safety, or their fortunes, as to induce many to forsake its profession. Add to all which, that Mahomet's victories not only operated by the natural effect of conquest, but that they were constantly represented, both to his friends and enemies, as divine declarations in his favour. Success was evidence. Prosperity carried with it, not only influence, but proof. "Ye have already (says he, after the battle of Bedr) had a miracle shown you, in two armies which attacked each other; one army fought for God's true religion, but the other were infidels."¶ Again; "Ye slew not those who were slain at Bedr, but God slew them.—If ye desire a decision of the matter between us, now hath a decision come unto you."**

Many more passages might be collected out of the Koran to the same effect. But they are unnecessary. The success of Mahometanism during this, and indeed, every future period of its history, bears so little resemblance to the early propagation of Christianity, that no inference whatever can justly be drawn from it to the prejudice of the Christian argument. For, what are we comparing? A Galilean peasant accompanied by a few fishermen, with a conqueror at the head of his army. We compare Jesus without force, without power, without support, without one external circumstance of attraction or influence, prevailing against the prejudices, the learning, the hierarchy, of his country; against the ancient religious opinions, the pompous religious rites, the philosophy, the wisdom, the authority of the Roman empire, in the most polished and enlightened period of its existence; with Mahomet making his way amongst Arabs; collecting followers in the midst of conquests and triumphs, in the darkest ages and countries of the world, and when success in arms not only operated by that command of men's wills and persons which attends prosperous undertakings, but was considered as a sure testimony of divine approbation. That multitudes, persuaded by this argument, should join the train of a victorious chief; that still greater multitudes should, without any argument, bow down before irresistible power; is a conduct in which we cannot see much to surprise us; in which we can see nothing that resembles the causes by which the establishment of Christianity was effected.

The success, therefore, of Mahometanism, stands not in the way of this important conclusion; that the propagation of Christianity, in the manner and under the circumstances in which it was propagated, is a *unique* in the history of the species. A Jewish peasant overthrew the religion of the world.

I have, nevertheless, placed the prevalency of the religion amongst the auxiliary arguments of its truth; because, whether it had prevailed or not, or whether its prevalency can or cannot be accounted for, the direct argument remains still. It is still true that a great number of men upon the spot, personally connected with the history and with the author of the religion, were induced by what they heard, and saw, and knew, not only to change their former opinions, but to give up their time, and sacrifice their ease, to traverse seas and kingdoms without rest and without weariness, to commit themselves to extreme dangers, to undertake incessant toils, to undergo grievous sufferings, and all this, solely in consequence, and in support, of their belief of facts, which, if true, establish the truth of the religion, which, if false, they must have known to be so.

* Mod. Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 255.
† Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 255.
‡ Sale's Koran, c. viii. p. 140. § Ib. c. ix. p. 149.
‖ Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 337. ¶ Sale's Koran, c. iii. p. 36.
** Ib. c. viii. p. 141.

PART III.

A BRIEF CONSIDERATION OF SOME POPULAR OBJECTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

The Discrepancies between the several Gospels.

I KNOW not a more rash or unphilosophical conduct of the understanding, than to reject the substance of a story, by reason of some diversity in the circumstances with which it is related. The usual character of human testimony is substantial truth under circumstantial variety. This is what the daily experience of courts of justice teaches. When accounts of a transaction come from the mouths of different witnesses, it is seldom that it

is not possible to pick out apparent or real inconsistencies between them. These inconsistencies are studiously displayed by an adverse pleader, but oftentimes with little impression upon the minds of the judges. On the contrary, a close and minute agreement induces the suspicion of confederacy and fraud. When written histories touch upon the same scenes of action, the comparison almost always affords ground for a like reflection. Numerous, and sometimes important, variations present themselves; not seldom also, absolute and final contradictions; yet neither one nor the other, are deemed sufficient to shake the credibility of the main fact. The embassy of the Jews to deprecate the execution of Claudian's order to place his statue in their temple, Philo places in harvest, Josephus in seed-time; both contemporary writers. No reader is led by this inconsistency to doubt, whether such an embassy was sent, or whether such an order was given. Our own history supplies examples of the same kind. In the account of the Marquis of Argyle's death, in the reign of Charles the Second, we have a very remarkable contradiction. Lord Clarendon relates that he was condemned to be hanged, which was performed the same day; on the contrary, Burnet, Woodrow, Heath, Echard, concur in stating that he was beheaded; and that he was condemned upon the Saturday, and executed upon the Monday.* Was any reader of English history ever sceptic enough to raise from hence a question, whether the Marquis of Argyle was executed or not? Yet this ought to be left in uncertainty, according to the principles upon which the Christian history has sometimes been attacked. Dr. Middleton contended, that the different hours of the day assigned to the crucifixion of Christ, by John and by the other evangelists, did not admit of the reconcilement which learned men had proposed; and then concludes the discussion with this hard remark: "We must be forced, with several of the critics, to leave the difficulty just as we found it, chargeable with all the consequences of manifest inconsistency."† But what are these consequences? By no means the discrediting of the history as to the principal fact, by a repugnancy (even supposing that repugnancy be not resolvable into different modes of computation) in the time of the day in which it is said to have taken place.

A great deal of the discrepancy observable in the Gospel, arises from *omission;* from a fact or a passage of Christ's life being noticed by one writer, which is unnoticed by another. Now, omission is at all times a very uncertain ground of objection. We perceive it, not only in the comparison of different writers, but even in the same writer when compared with himself. There are a great many particulars, and some of them of importance, mentioned by Josephus in his Antiquities, which, as we should have supposed, ought to have been put down by him in their place in the Jewish wars.‡ Suetonius, Tacitus, Dio Cassius, have, all three, written of the reign of Tiberius. Each has mentioned many things omitted by the rest,§ yet no objection is from thence taken to the respective credit of their histories. We have in our own times, if there were not something indecorous in the comparison, the life of an eminent person, written by three of his friends, in which there is very great variety in the incidents selected by them; some apparent, and perhaps some real contradictions; yet without any impeachment of the substantial truth of their accounts, of the authenticity of the books, of the competent information or general fidelity of the writers.

But these discrepancies will be still more numerous, when men do not write histories, but *memoirs;* which is perhaps the true name and proper description of our Gospels: that is, when they do not undertake, or ever meant, to deliver, in order of time, a regular and complete account of *all* the things of importance, which the person, who is the subject of their history, did or said; but only, out of many similar ones, to give such passages, or such actions and discourses, as offered themselves more immediately to their attention, came in the way of their inquiries, occurred to their recollection, or were suggested by their *particular design* at the time of writing.

This particular design may appear sometimes, but not always, nor often. Thus I think that the particular design which Saint Matthew had in view whilst he was writing the history of the resurrection, was to attest the faithful performance of Christ's promise to his disciples to go before them into Galilee; because he alone, except Mark, who seems to have taken it from him, has recorded this promise, and he alone has confined his narrative to that single appearance to the disciples which fulfilled it. It was the preconcerted, the great and most public manifestation of our Lord's person. It was the thing which dwelt upon Saint Matthew's mind, and he adapted his narrative to it. But, that there is nothing in Saint Matthew's language, which negatives other appearances, or which imports that this his appearance to his disciples in Galilee in pursuance of his promise, was his first or only appearance, is made pretty evident by Saint Mark's Gospel, which uses the same terms concerning the appearance in Galilee as Saint Matthew uses, yet itself records two other appearances prior to this: "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him as he said unto you." (xvi. 7.) We might be apt to infer from these words, that this was the *first* time they were to see him: at least, we might infer it, with as much reason as we draw the inference from the same words in Matthew: yet the historian himself did not perceive that he was leading his readers to any such conclusion; for in the twelfth and two following verses of this chapter, he informs us of two appearances, which, by comparing the order of events, are shown to have been prior to the appearance in Galilee. "He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country: and they went and told it unto the residue, neither believed they them: afterward he appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief, because they believed not them that had seen him after he was risen."

Probably the same observation, concerning the *particular design* which guided the historian, may be of use in comparing many other passages of the Gospels.

* See Biog. Britann.

† Middleton's Reflections answered by Benson. Hist. Christ. vol. iii. p. 50.

‡ Lardner, Cred. part i. vol. ii. p. 735, &c.

§ Ibid. p. 743.

CHAPTER II.

Erroneous Opinions imputed to the Apostles.

A SPECIES of candour which is shown towards every other book, is sometimes refused to the Scriptures; and that is, the placing of a distinction between judgment and testimony. We do not usually question the credit of a writer, by reason of an opinion he may have delivered upon subjects unconnected with his evidence: and even upon subjects connected with his account, or mixed with it in the same discourse or writing, we naturally separate facts from opinions, testimony from observation, narrative from argument.

To apply this equitable consideration to the Christian records, much controversy and much objection has been raised concerning the quotations of the Old Testament found in the New; some of which quotations, it is said, are applied in a sense, and to events, apparently different from that which they bear, and from those to which they belong, in the original. It is probable to my apprehension, that many of those quotations were intended by the writers of the New Testament as nothing more than *accommodations*. They quoted passages of their Scripture, which suited, and fell in with, the occasion before them, without always undertaking to assert, that the occasion was in the view of the author of the words. Such accommodations of passages from old authors, from books especially which are in every one's hands, are common with writers of all countries; but in none, perhaps, were more to be expected than in the writings of the Jews, whose literature was almost entirely confined to their Scriptures. Those prophecies which are alleged with more solemnity, and which are accompanied with a precise declaration, that they originally respected the event then related, are, I think, truly alleged. But were it otherwise; is the judgment of the writers of the New Testament, in interpreting passages of the Old, or sometimes, perhaps, in receiving established interpretations, so connected either with their veracity, or with their means of information concerning what was passing in their own times, as that a critical mistake, even were it clearly made out, should overthrow their historical credit?—Does it diminish it? Has it any thing to do with it?

Another error imputed to the first Christians, was the expected approach of the day of judgment. I would introduce this objection by a remark upon what appears to me a somewhat similar example. Our Saviour, speaking to Peter of John, said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"* These words, we find, had been so misconstrued, as that a report from thence "went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die." Suppose that this had come down to us amongst the prevailing opinions of the early Christians, and that the particular circumstance, from which the mistake sprang, had been lost (which, humanly speaking, was most likely to have been the case,) some, at this day, would have been ready to regard and quote the error, as an impeachment of the whole Christian system. Yet with how little justice such a conclusion would have been drawn, or rather such a presumption taken up, the information which we happen to possess enables us now to perceive. To those who think that the Scriptures lead us to believe, that the early Christians, and even the apostles, expected the approach of the day of judgment in their own times, the same reflection will occur, as that which we have made with respect to the more partial, perhaps, and temporary, but still no less ancient error concerning the duration of St. John's life. It was an error, it may be likewise said, which would effectually hinder those who entertained it from acting the part of impostors.

The difficulty which attends the subject of the present chapter, is contained in this question; If we once admit the fallibility of the apostolic judgment, where are we to stop, or in what can we rely upon it? To which question, as arguing with unbelievers, and as arguing for the substantial truth of the Christian history, and for that alone, it is competent to the advocate of Christianity to reply, Give me the apostles' testimony, and I do not stand in need of their judgment; give me the facts, and I have complete security for every conclusion I want.

But although I think that it is competent to the Christian apologist to return this answer; I do not think that it is the only answer which the objection is capable of receiving. The two following cautions, founded, I apprehend, in the most reasonable distinctions, will exclude all uncertainty upon this head which can be attended with danger.

First, to separate what was the object of the apostolic mission, and declared by them to be so, from what was extraneous to it, or only incidentally connected with it. Of points clearly extraneous to the religion, nothing need be said. Of points incidentally connected with it, something may be added. Demoniacal possession is one of these points: concerning the reality of which, as this place will not admit the examination, or even the production of the argument on either side of the question, it would be arrogance in me to deliver any judgment. And it is unnecessary. For what I am concerned to observe is, that even they who think it was a general, but erroneous opinion, of those times; and that the writers of the New Testament, in common with other Jewish writers of that age, fell into the manner of speaking and of thinking upon the subject, which then universally prevailed, need not be alarmed by the concession, as though they had any thing to fear from it, for the truth of Christianity. The doctrine was not what Christ brought into the world. It appears in the Christian records, incidentally and accidentally, as being the subsisting opinion of the age and country in which his ministry was exercised. It was no part of the object of *his* revelation, to regulate men's opinions concerning the action of spiritual substances upon animal bodies. At any rate it is unconnected with testimony. If a dumb person was by a word restored to the use of his speech, it signifies little to what cause the dumbness was ascribed; and the like of every other cure wrought upon those who are said to have been possessed. The malady was real, the cure was real, whether the popular explication of the cause was well founded, or not. The matter of fact, the change, so far as it was an object of sense, or of testimony, was in either case the same.

Secondly, that, in reading the apostolic writings, we distinguish between their doctrines and their arguments. Their doctrines came to them

* John xxi. 22.

by revelation properly so called; yet in propounding these doctrines in their writings or discourses, they were wont to illustrate, support, and enforce them, by such analogies, arguments, and considerations, as their own thoughts suggested. Thus the call of the Gentiles, that is, the admission of the Gentiles to the Christian profession without a previous subjection to the law of Moses, was imparted to the apostles by revelation, and was attested by the miracles which attended the Christian ministry among them. The apostles' own assurance of the matter rested upon this foundation. Nevertheless, Saint Paul, when treating of the subject, offers a great variety of topics in its proof and vindication. The doctrine itself must be received: but it is not necessary, in order to defend Christianity, to defend the propriety of every comparison, or the validity of every argument, which the apostle has brought into the discussion. The same observation applies to some other instances; and is, in my opinion, very well founded; "When divine writers argue upon any point, we are always bound to believe the conclusions that their reasonings end in, as parts of divine revelation: but we are not bound to be able to make out, or even to assent to, all the premises made use of by them, in their whole extent, unless it appear plainly, that they affirm the premises as expressly as they do the conclusions proved by them."*

CHAPTER III.

The Connexion of Christianity with the Jewish History.

UNDOUBTEDLY our Saviour assumes the divine origin of the Mosaic institution: and, independently of his authority, I conceive it to be very difficult to assign any other cause for the commencement or existence of that institution; especially for the singular circumstance of the Jews' adhering to the unity, when every other people slid into polytheism; for their being men in religion, children in every thing else; behind other nations in the arts of peace and war, superior to the most improved in their sentiments and doctrines relating to the Deity.† Undoubtedly, also, our Saviour recognizes the prophetic character of many of their ancient writers. So far, therefore, we are bound as Christians to go. But to make Christianity answerable with its life, for the circumstantial truth of each separate passage of the Old Testament, the genuineness of every book, the information, fidelity, and judgment of every writer in it, is to bring, I will not say great, but unnecessary difficulties, into the whole system. These books were universally read and received by the Jews of our Saviour's time. He and his apostles, in common with all other Jews, referred to them, alluded to them, used them. Yet, except where he expressly ascribes a divine authority to particular predictions, I do not know that we can strictly draw any conclusion from the books being so used and applied, beside the proof, which it unquestionably is, of their notoriety, and reception at that time. In this view, our Scriptures afford a valuable testimony to those of the Jews. But the nature of this testimony ought to be understood. It is surely very different from what it is sometimes represented to be, a specific ratification of each particular fact and opinion; and not only of each particular fact, but of the motives assigned for every action, together with the judgment of praise or dispraise bestowed upon them. Saint James, in his Epistle,* says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord." Notwithstanding this text, the reality of Job's history, and even the existence of such a person, has been always deemed a fair subject of inquiry and discussion amongst Christian divines. Saint James's authority is considered as good evidence of the existence of the book of Job at that time, and of its reception by the Jews; and of nothing more. Saint Paul, in his second Epistle to Timothy,† has this similitude: "Now, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." These names are not found in the Old Testament. And it is uncertain, whether Saint Paul took them from some apocryphal writing then extant, or from tradition. But no one ever imagined, that Saint Paul is here asserting the authority of the writing, if it was a written account which he quoted, or making himself answerable for the authenticity of the tradition; much less, that he so involves himself with either of these questions, as that the credit of his own history and mission should depend upon the fact, whether Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, or not. For what reason a more rigorous interpretation should be put upon other references, it is difficult to know. I do not mean, that other passages of the Jewish history stand upon no better evidence than the history of Job, or of Jannes and Jambres, (I think much otherwise;) but I mean, that a reference in the New Testament, to a passage in the Old, does not so fix its authority, as to exclude all inquiry into its credibility, or into the separate reasons upon which that credibility is founded; and that it is an unwarrantable, as well as unsafe rule to lay down concerning the Jewish history, what was never laid down concerning any other, that either every particular of it must be true, or the whole false.

I have thought it necessary to state this point explicitly, because a fashion, revived by Voltaire, and pursued by the disciples of his school, seems to have much prevailed of late, of attacking Christianity through the sides of Judaism. Some objections of this class are founded in misconstruction, some in exaggeration; but all proceed upon a supposition,

* Burnet's Expos. art. 6.

† "In the doctrine, for example, of the unity, the eternity, the omnipotence, the omniscience, the omnipresence, the wisdom, and the goodness, of God; in their opinions concerning Providence, and the creation, preservation, and government of the world." Campbell on Mir. p. 207. To which we may add, in the acts of their religion not being accompanied either with cruelties or impurities: in the religion itself being free from a species of superstition which prevailed universally in the popular religions of the ancient world, and which is to be found perhaps in all religions that have their origin in human artifice and credulity, *viz.* fanciful connexions between certain appearances and actions, and the destiny of nations or individuals. Upon these conceits rested the whole train of auguries and auspices, which formed so much even of the serious part of the religions of Greece and Rome, and of the charms and incantations which were practised in those countries by the common people. From every thing of this sort the religion of the Jews, and the Jews alone, was free. —Vide Priestley's Lectures on the Truth of the Jewish and Christian Revelation, 1794.

* Chap. v. 11. † Chap. iii. 8.

which has not been made out by argument, *viz.* that the attestation, which the Author and first teachers of Christianity gave to the divine mission of Moses and the prophets, extends to every point and portion of the Jewish history; and so extends as to make Christianity responsible in its own credibility, for the circumstantial truth (I had almost said for the critical exactness) of every narrative contained in the Old Testament.

CHAPTER IV.

Rejection of Christianity.

We acknowledge that the Christian religion, although it converted great numbers, did not produce a universal, or even a general conviction in the minds of men, of the age and countries in which it appeared. And this want of a more complete and extensive success, is called the *rejection* of the Christian history and miracles; and has been thought by some to form a strong objection to the reality of the facts which the history contains.

The matter of the objection divides itself into two parts; as it relates to the Jews, and as it relates to Heathen nations: because the minds of these two descriptions of men may have been, with respect to Christianity, under the influence of very different causes. The case of the Jews, inasmuch as our Saviour's ministry was originally addressed to them, offers itself first to our consideration.

"Now, upon the subject of the truth of the Christian religion; with *us*, there is but one question, *viz.* whether the miracles were actually wrought? From acknowledging the miracles, we pass instantaneously to the acknowledgment of the whole. No doubt lies between the premises and the conclusion. If we believe the works, or any one of them, we believe in Jesus. And this order of reasoning is become so universal and familiar, that we do not readily apprehend how it could ever have been otherwise. Yet it appears to me perfectly certain, that the state of thought, in the mind of a Jew of our Saviour's age, was totally different from this. After allowing the reality of the miracle, he had a great deal to do to persuade himself that Jesus was the Messiah. This is clearly intimated by various passages of the Gospel history. It appears that, in the apprehension of the writers of the New Testament, the miracles did not irresistibly carry, even those who saw them, to the conclusion intended to be drawn from them; or so compel assent, as to leave no room for suspense, for the exercise of candour, or the effects of prejudice. And to this point, at least, the evangelists may be allowed to be good witnesses; because it is a point, in which exaggeration or disguise would have been the other way. Their accounts, if they could be suspected of falsehood, would rather have magnified, than diminished, the effects of the miracles.

John vii. 21—31. "Jesus answered, and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.—If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing to him: do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? *Howbeit we know this man, whence he is, but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.* Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him, for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. *And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than those which this man hath done?*"

This passage is very observable. It exhibits the reasoning of different sorts of persons upon the occasion of a miracle, which persons of all sorts are represented to have acknowledged as real. One sort of men thought, that there was something very extraordinary in all this; but that still Jesus could not be the Christ, because there was a circumstance in his appearance which militated with an opinion concerning Christ, in which they had been brought up, and of the truth of which, it is probable, they had never entertained a particle of doubt, *viz.* that "When Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is." Another sort were inclined to believe him to be the Messiah. But even these did not argue as we should; did not consider the miracle as of itself decisive of the question; as what, if once allowed, excluded all farther debate upon the subject; but founded their opinion upon a kind of comparative reasoning, "When Christ cometh, will he do *more* miracles than those which this man hath done?"

Another passage in the same evangelist, and observable for the same purpose, is that in which he relates the resurrection of Lazarus: "Jesus," he tells us (xi. 43, 44,) "when he had thus spoken, cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth: and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go." One might have suspected, that at least all those who stood by the sepulchre, when Lazarus was raised, would have believed in Jesus. Yet the evangelist does not so represent it:—"Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him; but *some of them* went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done." We cannot suppose that the evangelist meant by this account, to leave his readers to imagine, that any of the spectators doubted about the truth of the miracle. Far from it. Unquestionably he states the miracle to have been fully allowed: yet the persons who allowed it, were, according to his representation, capable of retaining hostile sentiments towards Jesus. "Believing in Jesus" was not only to believe that he wrought miracles, but that he was the Messiah. With us there is no difference between these two things: with them, there was the greatest; and the difference is apparent in this transaction. If Saint John has represented the conduct of the Jews upon this occasion truly (and why he should not I cannot tell, for it rather makes against him than for him), it shows clearly the principles upon which their judgment proceeded. Whether he has related the matter truly

or not, the relation itself discovers the writer's own opinion of those principles: and that alone possesses considerable authority. In the next chapter, we have a reflection of the evangelist, entirely suited to this state of the case: "but though he had done so many miracles before them, yet believed they not on him."* The evangelist does not mean to impute the defect of their belief to any doubt about the miracles; but to their not perceiving, what all now sufficiently perceive, and what they would have perceived, had not their understandings been governed by strong prejudices, the infallible attestation which the works of Jesus bore to the truth of his pretensions.

The ninth chapter of Saint John's Gospel contains a very circumstantial account of the cure of a blind man: a miracle submitted to all the scrutiny and examination which a sceptic could propose. If a modern unbeliever had drawn up the interrogatories, they could hardly have been more critical or searching. The account contains also a very curious conference between the Jewish rulers and the patient, in which the point for our present notice is their resistance of the force of the miracle, and of the conclusion to which it led, after they had failed in discrediting its evidence. "We know that God spake unto Moses; but as for this fellow, we know not whence he is." That was the answer which set their minds at rest. And by the help of much prejudice, and great unwillingness to yield, it might do so. In the mind of the poor man restored to sight, which was under no such bias, and felt no such reluctance, the miracle had its natural operation. "Herein," says he, "is a marvellous thing that ye know not from whence he is, yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know, that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began, was it not heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." We do not find that the Jewish rulers had any other reply to make to this defence, than that which authority is sometimes apt to make to argument, "Dost thou teach us?"

If it shall be inquired, how a turn of thought, so different from what prevails at present, should obtain currency with the ancient Jews; the answer is found in two opinions which are proved to have subsisted in that age and country. The one was, their expectation of a Messiah of a kind totally contrary to what the appearance of Jesus bespoke him to be; the other, their persuasion of the agency of demons in the production of supernatural effects. These opinions are not *supposed* by us for the purpose of argument, but are evidently recognised in Jewish writings, as well as in ours. And it ought moreover to be considered, that in these opinions the Jews of that age had been from their infancy brought up; that they were opinions, the grounds of which they had probably few of them inquired into, and of the truth of which they entertained no doubt. And I think that these two opinions conjointly afford an explanation of their conduct. The first put them upon seeking out some excuse to themselves for not receiving Jesus in the character in which he claimed to be received; and the second supplied them with just such an excuse as they wanted. Let Jesus work what miracles he would, still the answer was in readiness, "that he wrought them by the assistance of Beelzebub." And to this answer no reply could be made, but that which our Saviour did make, by showing that the tendency of his mission was so adverse to the views with which this being was, by the objectors themselves, supposed to act, that it could not reasonably be supposed that he would assist in carrying it on. The power displayed in the miracles did not alone refute the Jewish solution, because the interposition of invisible agents being once admitted, it is impossible to ascertain the limits by which their efficiency is circumscribed. We of this day may be disposed, possibly, to think such opinions too absurd to have been ever seriously entertained. I am not bound to contend for the credibility of the opinions. They were at least as reasonable as the belief in witchcraft. They were opinions in which the Jews of that age had from their infancy been instructed; and those who cannot see enough in the force of this reason, to account for their conduct towards our Saviour, do not sufficiently consider how such opinions may sometimes become very general in a country, and with what pertinacity, when once become so, they are, for that reason alone, adhered to. In the suspense which these notions, and the prejudices resulting from them, might occasion, the candid and docile and humble minded would probably decide in Christ's favour; the proud and obstinate, together with the giddy and the thoughtless, almost universally against him.

This state of opinion discovers to us also the reason of what some choose to wonder at, why the Jews should reject miracles when they saw them, yet rely so much upon the tradition of them in their own history. It does not appear, that it had ever entered into the minds of those who lived in the time of Moses and the prophets, to ascribe *their* miracles to the supernatural agency of evil beings. The solution was not then invented. The authority of Moses and the prophets being established, and become the foundation of the national polity and religion, it was not probable that the later Jews, brought up in a reverence for that religion and the subjects of that polity, should apply to their history a reasoning which tended to overthrow the foundation of both.

II. The infidelity of the Gentile world, and that more especially of men of rank and learning in it, is resolved into a principle which, in my judgment, will account for the inefficacy of any argument, or any evidence whatever, *viz.* contempt prior to examination. The state of religion amongst the Greeks and Romans, had a natural tendency to induce this disposition. Dionysius Halicarnassensis remarks, that there were six hundred different kinds of religions or sacred rites exercised at Rome.* The superior classes of the community treated them all as fables. Can we wonder then, that Christianity was included in the number, without inquiry into its separate merits, or the particular grounds of its pretensions? It might be either true or false for any thing they knew about it. The religion had nothing in its character which immediately engaged their notice It mixed with no politics. It produced no fine writers. It contained no curious speculations. When it did reach their knowledge, I doubt not

* Chap. xii. 37.

* Jortin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. i. p. 371.

but that it appeared to them a very strange system, --so unphilosophical,—dealing so little in argument and discussion, in such arguments however and discussions as they were accustomed to entertain. What is said of Jesus Christ, of his nature, office, and ministry, would be, in the highest degree, alien from the conceptions of their theology. The Redeemer and the destined Judge of the human race, a poor young man, executed at Jerusalem with two thieves upon a cross! Still more would the language in which the Christian doctrine was delivered, be dissonant and barbarous to their ears. What knew they of grace, of redemption, of justification, of the blood of Christ shed for the sins of men, of reconcilement, of mediation? Christianity was made up of points they had never thought of; of terms which they had never heard.

It was presented also to the imagination of the learned Heathen under additional disadvantage, by reason of its real, and still more of its nominal, connexion with Judaism. It shared in the obloquy and ridicule with which that people and their religion were treated by the Greeks and Romans. They regarded Jehovah himself, only as the idol of the Jewish nation, and what was related of him, as of a piece with what was told of the tutelar deities of other countries: nay, the Jews were in a particular manner ridiculed for being a credulous race; so that whatever reports of a miraculous nature came out of that country, were looked upon by the heathen world as false and frivolous. When they heard of Christianity, they heard of it as a quarrel amongst this people, about some articles of their own superstition. Despising, therefore, as they did, the whole system, it was not probable that they would enter, with any degree of seriousness or attention, into the detail of its disputes, or the merits of either side. How little they knew, and with what carelessness they judged, of these matters, appears, I think, pretty plainly from an example of no less weight than that of Tacitus, who, in a grave and professed discourse upon the history of the Jews, states, that they worshipped the effigy of an ass.* The passage is a proof, how prone the learned men of those times were, and upon how little evidence, to heap together stories which might increase the contempt and odium in which that people was holden. The same foolish charge is also confidently repeated by Plutarch.†

It is observable, that all these considerations are of a nature to operate with the greatest force upon the highest ranks; upon men of education, and that order of the public from which *writers* are principally taken: I may add also, upon the philosophical as well as the libertine character; upon the Antonines or Julian, not less than upon Nero or Domitian; and more particularly, upon that large and polished class of men, who acquiesced in the general persuasion, that all they had to do was to practice the duties of morality, and to worship the deity *more patrio;* a habit of thinking, liberal as it may appear, which shuts the door against every argument for a new religion. The considerations above-mentioned, would acquire also strength from the prejudice which men of rank and learning universally entertain against any thing that *originates* with the vulgar and illiterate; which prejudice is known to be as obstinate as any prejudice whatever.

Yet Christianity was still making its way: and, amidst so many impediments to its progress, so much difficulty in procuring audience and attention, its actual success is more to be wondered at, than that it should not have universally conquered scorn and indifference, fixed the levity of a voluptuous age, or, through a cloud of adverse prejudications, opened for itself a passage to the hearts and understandings of the scholars of the age.

And the cause, which is here assigned for the rejection of Christianity by men of rank and learning among the Heathens, namely, a strong antecedent contempt, accounts also for their *silence* concerning it. If they had rejected it upon examination, they would have written about it; they would have given their reasons. Whereas, what men repudiate upon the strength of some prefixed persuasion, or from a settled contempt of the subject, of the persons who propose it, or of the manner in which it is proposed, they do not naturally write books about, or notice much in what they write upon other subjects.

The letters of the Younger Pliny furnish an example of the silence, and let us, in some measure, into the cause of it. From his celebrated correspondence with Trajan, we know that the Christian religion prevailed in a very considerable degree in the province over which he presided; that it had excited his attention; that he had inquired into the matter, just so much as a Roman magistrate might be expected to inquire, *viz.* whether the religion contained any opinions dangerous to government; but that of its doctrines, its evidences, or its books, he had not taken the trouble to inform himself with any degree of care or correctness. But although Pliny had viewed Christianity in a nearer position than most of his learned countrymen saw it in; yet he had regarded the whole with such negligence and disdain (farther than as it seemed to concern his administration,) that, in more than two hundred and forty letters of his which have come down to us, the subject is never once again mentioned. If, out of this number, the two letters between him and Trajan had been lost; with what confidence would the obscurity of the Christian religion have been argued from Pliny's silence about it, and with how little truth!

The name and character which Tacitus has given to Christianity, "exitiabilis superstitio," (a pernicious superstition,) and by which two words he disposes of the whole question of the merits or demerits of the religion, afford a strong proof how little he knew, or concerned himself to know, about the matter. I apprehend that I shall not be contradicted, when I take upon me to assert, that no unbeliever of the present age would apply this epithet to the Christianity of the New Testament, or not allow that it was entirely unmerited. Read the instructions given by a great teacher of the religion, to those very Roman converts of whom Tacitus speaks; and given also a very few years before the time of which he is speaking; and which are not, let it be observed, a collection of fine sayings brought together from different parts of a large work, but stand in one entire passage of a public letter, without the intermixture of a single thought which is frivolous or exceptionable: —"Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which

* Tacit. Hist. lib. v. c. 2.
† Sympos. lib. iv. quæst. 5.

is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another: not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord: rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer: distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord: therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink: for, in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute, to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honour, to whom honour.

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."*

Read this, and then think of "exitiabilis superstitio!!"—Or if we be not allowed, in contending with heathen authorities, to produce our books against theirs, we may at least be permitted to confront theirs with one another. Of this "pernicious superstition," what could *Pliny* find to blame, when he was led, by his office, to institute something like an examination into the conduct and principles of the sect? He discovered nothing, but that they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves a hymn to Christ as a God, and to bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but, not to be guilty of theft, robbery, or adultery; never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it.

Upon the words of Tacitus we may build the following observations:—

First; That we are well warranted in calling the view under which the learned men of that age beheld Christianity, an obscure and distant view. Had Tacitus known more of Christianity, of its precepts, duties, constitution, or design, however he had discredited the story, he would have respected the principle. He would have described the religion differently, though he had rejected it. It has been satisfactorily shown, that the "superstition" of the Christians consisted in worshipping a person unknown to the Roman calendar; and that the "perniciousness," with which they were reproached, was nothing else but their opposition to the established polytheism; and this view of the matter was just such a one as might be expected to occur to a mind, which held the sect in too much contempt to concern itself about the grounds and reasons of their conduct.

Secondly; We may from hence remark, how little reliance can be placed upon the most acute judgments, in subjects which they are pleased to despise; and which, of course, they from the first consider as unworthy to be inquired into. Had not Christianity survived to tell its own story, it must have gone down to posterity as a "pernicious superstition;" and that upon the credit of Tacitus's account, much, I doubt not, strengthened by the name of the writer, and the reputation of his sagacity.

Thirdly; That this contempt prior to examination, is an intellectual vice, from which the greatest faculties of mind are not free. I know not, indeed, whether men of the greatest faculties of mind, are not the most subject to it. Such men feel themselves seated upon an eminence. Looking down from their height upon the follies of mankind, they behold contending tenets wasting their idle strength upon one another, with the common disdain of the absurdity of them all. This habit of thought, however comfortable to the mind which entertains it, or however natural to great parts, is extremely dangerous; and more apt, than almost any other disposition, to produce hasty and contemptuous, and, by consequence, erroneous judgments, both of persons and opinions.

Fourthly; We need not be surprised at many writers of that age not mentioning Christianity at all; when they who did mention it, appear to have entirely misconceived its nature and character; and in consequence of this misconception, to have regarded it with negligence and contempt.

To the knowledge of the greatest part of the learned Heathens, the facts of the Christian history could only come by report. The books, probably, they never looked into. The settled habit of their minds was, and long had been, an indiscriminate rejection of all reports of the kind. With these sweeping conclusions, truth hath no chance. It depends upon distinction. If they would not inquire, how should they be convinced? It might be founded in truth, though they, who made no search, might not discover it.

* Romans xii. 9; xiii. 13.

"Men of rank and fortune, of wit and abilities, are often found, even in Christian countries, to be surprisingly ignorant of religion, and of every thing that relates to it. Such were many of the Heathens. Their thoughts were all fixed upon other things; upon reputation and glory, upon wealth and power, upon luxury and pleasure, upon business or learning. They thought, and they had reason to think, that the religion of their country was fable and forgery, a heap of inconsistent lies; which inclined them to suppose that other religions were no better. Hence it came to pass, that when the apostles preached the Gospel, and wrought miracles in confirmation of a doctrine every way worthy of God, many Gentiles knew little or nothing of it, and would not take the least pains to inform themselves about it. This appears plainly from ancient history."*

I think it by no means unreasonable to suppose, that the Heathen public, especially that part which is made up of men of rank and education, were divided into two classes; those who despised Christianity beforehand, and those who received it. In correspondency with which division of character, the writers of that age would also be of two classes; those who were silent about Christianity, and those who were Christians. "A good man, who attended sufficiently to the Christian affairs, would become a Christian; after which his testimony ceased to be Pagan, and became Christian."†

I must also add, that I think it sufficiently proved, that the notion of magic was resorted to by the Heathen adversaries of Christianity, in like manner as that of diabolical agency had before been by the Jews. Justin Martyr alleges this as his reason for arguing from prophecy, rather than from miracles. Origen imputes this evasion to Celsus; Jerome to Porphyry; and Lactantius to the Heathen in general. The several passages, which contain these testimonies, will be produced in the next chapter. It being difficult however to ascertain in what degree this notion prevailed, especially amongst the superior ranks of the Heathen communities, another, and I think an adequate, cause has been assigned for their infidelity. It is probable, that in many cases the two causes would operate together.

CHAPTER V.

That the Christian Miracles are not recited, or appealed to, by early Christian Writers themselves, so fully or frequently as might have been expected.

I SHALL consider this objection, first, as it applies to the letters of the apostles, preserved in the New Testament; and secondly, as it applies to the remaining writings of other early Christians.

The epistles of the apostles are either hortatory or argumentative. So far as they were occupied in delivering lessons of duty, rules of public order, admonitions against certain prevailing corruptions, against vice, or any particular species of it, or in fortifying and encouraging the constancy of the disciples under the trials to which they were exposed, there appears to be no place or occasion for more of these references than we actually find.

So far as the epistles are argumentative, the nature of the argument which they handle accounts for the infrequency of these allusions. These epistles were not written to prove the truth of Christianity. The subject under consideration was not that which the miracles decided, the reality of our Lord's mission; but it was that which the miracles did not decide, the nature of his person or power, the design of his advent, its effects, and of those effects the value, kind, and extent. Still I maintain, that miraculous evidence lies at the bottom of the argument. For nothing could be so preposterous as for the disciples of Jesus to dispute amongst themselves, or with others, concerning his office or character, unless they believed that he had shown, by supernatural proofs, that there was something extraordinary in both. Miraculous evidence, therefore, forming not the texture of these arguments, but the ground and substratum, if it be occasionally discerned, if it be incidentally appealed to, it is exactly so much as ought to take place, supposing the history to be true.

As a farther answer to the objection, that the apostolic epistles do not contain so frequent, or such direct and circumstantial recitals of miracles as might be expected, I would add, *that the apostolic epistles resemble in this respect the apostolic speeches;* which speeches are given by a writer who distinctly records numerous miracles wrought by these apostles themselves, and by the Founder of the institution in their presence: that it is unwarrantable to contend, that the omission, or infrequency, of such recitals in the speeches of the apostles, negatives the existence of the miracles, when the speeches are given in immediate conjunction with the history of those miracles: and that a conclusion which cannot be inferred from the speeches, without contradicting the whole tenor of the book which contains them, cannot be inferred from letters, which, in this respect, are similar only to the speeches.

To prove the similitude which we allege, it may be remarked, that although in Saint Luke's Gospel the apostle Peter is represented to have been present at many decisive miracles wrought by Christ; and although the second part of the same history ascribes other decisive miracles to Peter himself, particularly the cure of the lame man at the gate of the temple, (Acts iii. 1,) the death of Ananias and Sapphira, (Acts v. 1,) the cure of Æneas, (Acts ix. 34,) the resurrection of Dorcas; (Acts ix. 40,) yet out of six speeches of Peter, preserved in the Acts, I know but two in which reference is made to the miracles wrought by Christ, and only one in which he refers to miraculous powers possessed by himself. In his speech upon the day of Pentecost, Peter addressed his audience with great solemnity, thus: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know,"* &c. In his speech upon the conversion of Cornelius, he delivers his testimony to the miracles performed by Christ, in these words: "we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem."† But in this latter speech, no allusion appears to the miracles wrought by himself, notwithstanding that the

* Jortin's Disc. on the Christ. Rel. p. 66. ed. 4th.
† Hartley, Obs. p. 119.

* Acts ii. 22. † x. 39.

miracles above enumerated all preceded the time in which it was delivered. In his speech upon the election of Matthias,* no distinct reference is made to any of the miracles of Christ's history, except his resurrection. The same also may be observed of his speech upon the cure of the lame man at the gate of the temple:† the same in his speech before the Sanhedrim;‡ the same in his second apology in the presence of that assembly. Stephen's long speech contains no reference whatever to miracles, though it be expressly related of him, in the book which preserves the speech, and almost immediately before the speech, "that he did great wonders and miracles among the people."§ Again, although miracles be expressly attributed to Saint Paul in the Acts of the Apostles, first generally, as at Iconium, (Acts xiv. 3,) during the whole tour through the Upper Asia, (xiv. 27; xv. 12,) at Ephesus: (xix. 11, 12:) secondly, in specific instances, as the blindness of Elymas at Paphos,‖ the cure of the cripple at Lystra,¶ of the Pythoness at Philippi,** the miraculous liberation from prison in the same city,†† the restoration of Eutychus,‡‡ the predictions of his shipwreck,§§ the viper at Melita,‖‖ the cure of Publius's father,¶¶ at all which miracles, except the first two, the historian himself was present: notwithstanding, I say, this positive ascription of miracles to Saint Paul, yet in the speeches delivered by him, and given as delivered by him, in the same book in which the miracles are related, and the miraculous powers asserted, the appeals to his own miracles, or indeed to any miracles at all, are rare and incidental. In his speech at Antioch in Pisidia,*** there is no allusion but to the resurrection. In his discourse at Miletus,††† none to any miracle; none in his speech before Felix;‡‡‡ none in his speech before Festus;§§§ except to Christ's resurrection, and his own conversion.

Agreeably hereunto, in thirteen letters ascribed to Saint Paul, we have incessant references to Christ's resurrection, frequent references to his own conversion, three indubitable references to the miracles which he wrought;‖‖‖ four other references to the same, less direct, yet highly probable;¶¶¶ but more copious or circumstantial recitals we have not. The consent, therefore, between Saint Paul's speeches and letters, is in this respect sufficiently exact: and the reason in both is the same; namely, that the miraculous history was all along *presupposed*, and that the question, which occupied the speaker's and the writer's thoughts, was this: whether, allowing the history of Jesus to be true, he was, upon the strength of it, to be received as the promised Messiah; and, if he was, what were the consequences, what was the object and benefit of his mission?

The general observation which has been made upon the apostolic writings, namely, that the subject of which they treated, did not lead them to any direct recital of the Christian history, belongs also to the writings of the apostolic fathers. The epistle of Barnabas is, in its subject and general composition, much like the epistle to the Hebrews; an allegorical application of divers passages of the Jewish history, of their law and ritual, to those parts of the Christian dispensation in which the author perceived a resemblance. The epistle of Clement was written for the sole purpose of quieting certain dissensions that had arisen amongst the members of the church of Corinth, and of reviving in their minds that temper and spirit of which their predecessors in the Gospel had left them an example. The work of Hermas is a vision: quotes neither the Old Testament nor the New; and merely falls now and then into the language, and the mode of speech, which the author had read in our Gospels. The epistles of Polycarp and Ignatius had for their principal object the order and discipline of the churches which they addressed. Yet, under all these circumstances of disadvantage, the great points of the Christian history are fully recognised. This hath been shown in its proper place.*

There is, however, another class of writers, to whom the answer above given, *viz.* the unsuitableness of any such appeals or references as the objection demands, to the subjects of which the writings treated, does not apply; and that is, the class of ancient *apologists*, whose declared design it was to defend Christianity, and to give the reasons of their adherence to it. It is necessary, therefore, to inquire how the matter of the objection stands in these.

The most ancient apologist, of whose works we have the smallest knowledge, is Quadratus. Quadratus lived about seventy years after the ascension, and presented his apology to the emperor Adrian. From a passage of this work, preserved in Eusebius, it appears that the author did directly and formally appeal to the miracles of Christ, and in terms as express and confident as we could desire. The passage (which has been once already stated) is as follows: "The works of our Saviour were always conspicuous, for they were real; both they that were healed, and they that were raised from the dead, were seen, not only when they were healed, or raised, but for a long time afterward: not only whilst he dwelled on this earth, but also after his departure, and for a good while after it; insomuch as that some of them have reached to our times."† Nothing can be more rational or satisfactory than this.

Justin Martyr, the next of the Christian apologists whose work is not lost, and who followed Quadratus at the distance of about thirty years, has touched upon passages of Christ's history in so many places, that a tolerably complete account of Christ's life might be collected out of his works. In the following quotation, he asserts the performance of miracles by Christ in words as strong and positive as the language possesses: "Christ healed those who from their birth were blind, and deaf, and lame; causing by his word, one to leap, another to hear, and a third to see: and having raised the dead, and caused them to live, he, by his works, excited attention, and induced the men of that age to know him. Who, however, seeing these things done, said that it was a magical appearance, and dared to call him a magician, and a deceiver of the people."‡

In his first apology,§ Justin expressly assigns the reason for his having recourse to the argument from prophecy, rather than alleging the miracles of the Christian history: which reason was, that

* Acts i. 15. † iii. 12. ‡ iv. 8. § vi. 8.
‖ xiii. 11. ¶ xiv. 8. ** xvi. 16. †† xvi. 26.
‡‡ xx. 10. §§ xxvii. 1. ‖‖ xxviii. 6. ¶¶ xxviii. 8.
*** xiii. 16. ††† xx. 17. ‡‡‡ xxiv. 10. §§§ xxv. 8.
‖‖‖ Gal. iii. 5. Rom. xv. 18, 19. 2 Cor. xii. 12.
¶¶¶ 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. Eph. iii. 7. Gal. ii. 8. 1 Thess. i. 5.

* See pages 297, 298, &c. † Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 3.
‡ Just. Dial. p. 258. ed. Thirlby.
§ Apolog. prim. p. 48. ed. Thirlby.

the persons with whom he contended would ascribe these miracles to magic; "Lest any of our opponents should say, What hinders, but that he who is called Christ by us, being a man sprung from men, performed the miracles which we attribute to him, by magical art?" The suggestion of this reason meets, as I apprehend, the very point of the present objection; more especially when we find Justin followed in it by other writers of that age. Irenæus, who came about forty years after him, notices the same evasion in the adversaries of Christianity, and replies to it by the same argument: "But if they shall say, that the Lord performed these things by an illusory appearance, (φαντασιωδως,) leading these objectors to the prophecies, we will show from them, that all things were thus predicted concerning him, and strictly came to pass."* Lactantius, who lived a century lower, delivers the same sentiment, upon the same occasion; "He performed miracles;—we might have supposed him to have been a magician, as ye say, and as the Jews then supposed, if all the prophets had not with one spirit foretold that Christ should perform these very things."†

But to return to the Christian apologists in their order. Tertullian:—"That person whom the Jews had vainly imagined, from the meanness of his appearance, to be a mere man, they afterward, in consequence of the power he exerted, considered as a magician, when he, with one word, ejected devils out of the bodies of men, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the leprous, strengthened the nerves of those that had the palsy, and, lastly, with one command, restored the dead to life; when he, I say, made the very elements obey him, assuaged the storms, walked upon the seas, demonstrating himself to be the Word of God."‡

Next in the catalogue of professed apologists we may place Origen, who, it is well known, published a formal defence of Christianity, in answer to Celsus, a Heathen, who had written a discourse against it. I know no expressions, by which a plainer or more positive appeal to the Christian miracles can be made, than the expressions used by Origen; "Undoubtedly we do think him to be the Christ, and the Son of God, because he healed the lame and the blind; and we are the more confirmed in this persuasion, by what is written in the prophecies: 'Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear, and the lame man shall leap as a hart.' But that he also raised the dead; and that it is not a fiction of those who wrote the Gospels, is evident from hence, that, if it had been a fiction, there would have been many recorded to be raised up, and such as had been a long time in their graves. But, it not being a fiction, few have been recorded: for instance, the daughter of the ruler of a synagogue, of whom I do not know why he said, She is not dead but sleepeth, expressing something peculiar to her, not common to all dead persons: and the only son of a widow, on whom he had compassion, and raised him to life, after he had bid the bearers of the corpse to stop; and the third, Lazarus, who had been buried four days." This is positively to assert the miracles of Christ, and it is also to comment upon them, and that with a considerable degree of accuracy and candour.

In another passage of the same author, we meet with the old solution of magic applied to the miracles of Christ by the adversaries of the religion. "Celsus," saith Origen, "well knowing what great works may be alleged to have been done by Jesus, pretends to grant that the things related of him are true; such as healing diseases, raising the dead, feeding multitudes with a few loaves, of which large fragments were left."* And then Celsus gives, it seems, an answer to these proofs of our Lord's mission, which, as Origen understood it, resolved the phenomena into magic; for Origen begins his reply by observing, "You see that Celsus in a manner allows that there is such a thing as magic."†

It appears also from the testimony of Saint Jerome, that Porphyry, the most learned and able of the Heathen writers against Christianity, resorted to the same solution: "Unless," says he, speaking to Vigilantius, "according to the manner of the Gentiles and the profane, of *Porphyry* and Eunomius, you pretend that these are the tricks of demons."‡

This magic, these demons, this illusory appearance, this comparison with the tricks of jugglers, by which many of that age accounted so easily for the Christian miracles, and which answers the advocates of Christianity often thought it necessary to refute by arguments drawn from other topics, and particularly from prophecy, (to which, it seems these solutions did not apply,) we now perceive to be gross subterfuges. That such reasons were ever seriously urged, and seriously received, is only a proof, what a gloss and varnish fashion can give to any opinion.

It appears, therefore, that the miracles of Christ understood as we understand them, in their literal and historical sense, were positively and precisely asserted and appealed to by the apologists for Christianity; which answers the allegation of the objection.

I am ready, however, to admit, that the ancient Christian advocates did not insist upon the miracles in argument, so frequently as I should have done. It was their lot to contend with notions of magical agency, against which the mere production of the facts was not sufficient for the convincing of their adversaries: I do not know whether they themselves thought it quite decisive of the controversy. But since it is proved, I conceive with certainty, that the sparingness with which they appealed to miracles, was owing neither to their ignorance, nor their doubt of the facts, it is, at any rate, an objection, not to the truth of the history, but to the judgment of its defenders.

CHAPTER VI.

Want of universality in the knowledge and reception of Christianity, and of greater clearness in the evidence.

Of a revelation which really came from God, the proof, it has been said, would in all ages be so public and manifest, that no part of the human species would remain ignorant of it, no understanding could fail of being convinced by it.

The advocates of Christianity do not pretend

* Iren. l. ii. c. 57. † Lactant. v. 3.
‡ Tertull. Apolog. p. 20; ed. Priorii, Par. 1675.

* Orig. Cont. Cels. l. ii. sect. 48.
† Lardner's Jewish and Heath. Test. vol. ii. p. 294. ed. 4to. ‡ Jerome cont. Vigil.

that the evidence of their religion possesses these qualities. They do not deny that we can conceive it to be within the compass of divine power, to have communicated to the world a higher degree of assurance, and to have given to his communication a stronger and more extensive influence. For any thing we are able to discern, God *could* have so formed men, as to have perceived the truths of religion intuitively; or to have carried on a communication with the other world, whilst they lived in this; or to have seen the individuals of the species, instead of dying, pass to heaven by a sensible translation. He could have presented a separate miracle to each man's senses. He could have established a standing miracle. He could have caused miracles to be wrought in every different age and country. These, and many more methods, which we may imagine, if we once give loose to our imaginations, are, so far as we can judge, all practicable.

The question, therefore, is, not whether Christianity possesses the highest possible degree of evidence, but whether the not having more evidence be a sufficient reason for rejecting that which we have.

Now their appears to be no fairer method of judging, concerning any dispensation which is alleged to come from God, when a question is made whether such a dispensation could come from God or not, than by comparing it with other things which are acknowledged to proceed from the same counsel, and to be produced by the same agency. If the dispensation in question labour under no defects but what apparently belong to other dispensations, these seeming defects do not justify us in setting aside the proofs which are offered of its authenticity, if they be otherwise entitled to credit.

Throughout that order then of nature, of which God is the author, what we find is a system of *beneficence:* we are seldom or ever able to make out a system of *optimism.* I mean, that there are few cases in which, if we permit ourselves to range in possibilities, we cannot suppose something more perfect, and more unobjectionable, than what we see. The rain which descends from heaven, is confessedly amongst the contrivances of the Creator, for the sustentation of the animals and vegetables which subsist upon the surface of the earth. Yet how partially and irregularly is it supplied! How much of it falls upon the sea, where it can be of no use! how often is it wanted where it would be of the greatest! What tracts of continent are rendered deserts by the scarcity of it! Or, not to speak of extreme cases, how much, sometimes, do inhabited countries suffer by its deficiency or delay!—We could imagine, if to imagine were our business, the matter to be otherwise regulated. We could imagine showers to fall, just where and when they would do good; always seasonable, every where sufficient; so distributed as not to leave a field upon the face of the globe scorched by drought, or even a plant withering for the lack of moisture. Yet, does the difference between the real case and the imagined case, or the seeming inferiority of the one to the other, authorize us to say, that the present disposition of the atmosphere is not amongst the productions or the designs of the Deity? Does it check the inference which we draw from the confessed beneficence of the provision? or does it make us cease to admire the contrivance?—The observation, which we have exemplified in the single instance of the rain of heaven, may be repeated concerning most of the phenomena of nature; and the true conclusion to which it leads is this: that to inquire what the Deity might have done, could have done, or, as we even sometimes presume to speak, ought to have done, or, in hypothetical cases would have done, and to build any propositions upon such inquiries against evidence of facts, is wholly unwarrantable. It is a mode of reasoning which will not do in natural history, which will not do in natural religion, which cannot therefore be applied with safety to revelation. It may have some foundation, in certain speculative *a priori* ideas of the divine attributes; but it has none in experience, or in analogy. The general character of the works of nature is, on the one hand, goodness both in design and effect; and, on the other hand, a liability to difficulty, and to objections, if such objections be allowed, by reason of seeming incompleteness or uncertainty in attaining their end. Christianity participates of this character. The true similitude between nature and revelation consists in this; that they each bear strong marks of their original; that they each also bear appearances of irregularity and defect. A system of strict optimism may nevertheless be the real system in both cases. But what I contend is, that the proof is hidden from *us;* that we ought not to expect to perceive *that* in revelation, which we hardly perceive in any thing; that beneficence, of which we *can* judge, ought to satisfy us, that optimism, of which we *cannot* judge, ought not to be sought after. We can judge of beneficence, because it depends upon effects which we experience, and upon the relation between the means which we see acting and the ends which we see produced. We cannot judge of optimism, because it necessarily implies a comparison of that which is tried, with that which is not tried; of consequences which we see, with others which we imagine, and concerning many of which, it is more than probable we know nothing; concerning some, that we have no notion.

If Christianity be compared with the state and progress of natural religion, the argument of the objector will gain nothing by the comparison. I remember hearing an unbeliever say, that, if God had given a revelation, he would have written it in the skies. Are the truths of natural religion written in the skies, or in a language which every one reads? or is this the case with the most useful arts, or the most necessary sciences of human life? An Otaheitean or an Esquimaux knows nothing of Christianity; does he know more of the principles of deism, or morality? which, notwithstanding his ignorance, are neither untrue, nor unimportant, nor uncertain. The existence of the Deity is left to be collected from observations, which every man does not make, which every man perhaps, is not capable of making. Can it be argued, that God does not exist, because, if he did, he would let us see him, or discover himself to mankind by proofs (such as, we may think, the nature of the subject merited,) which no inadvertency could miss, no prejudice withstand?

If Christianity be regarded as a providential instrument for the melioration of mankind, its progress and diffusion resemble that of other causes by which human life is improved. The diversity is not greater, nor the advance more slow, in reli-

gion, than we find it to be in learning, liberty, government, laws. The Deity hath not touched the order of nature in vain. The Jewish religion produced great and permanent effects; the Christian religion hath done the same. It hath disposed the world to amendment. It hath put things in a train. It is by no means improbable, that it may become universal: and that the world may continue in that stage so long as that the duration of its reign may bear a vast proportion to the time of its partial influence.

When we argue concerning Christianity, that it must necessarily be true, because it is beneficial, we go, perhaps, too far on one side: and we certainly go too far on the other, when we conclude that it must be false, because it is not so efficacious as we could have supposed. The question of its truth is to be tried upon its proper evidence, without deferring much to this sort of argument, on either side. "The evidence," as Bishop Butler hath rightly observed, "depends upon the judgment we form of human conduct, under given circumstances, of which it may be presumed that we know something; the objection stands upon the supposed conduct of the Deity, under relations with which we are not acquainted."

What would be the real effect of that overpowering evidence which our adversaries require in a revelation, it is difficult to foretell; at least, we must speak of it as of a dispensation of which we have no experience. Some consequences however would, it is probable, attend this economy, which do not seem to befit a revelation that proceeded from God. One is, that irresistible proof would restrain the voluntary powers too much; would not answer the purpose of trial and probation; would call for no exercise of candour, seriousness, humility, inquiry; no submission of passion, interests, and prejudices, to moral evidence and to probable truth; no habits of reflection; none of that previous desire to learn and to obey the will of God, which forms perhaps the test of the virtuous principle, and which induces men to attend, with care and reverence, to every credible intimation of that will, and to resign present advantages and present pleasures to every reasonable expectation of propitiating his favour. "Men's moral probation may be, whether they will take due care to inform themselves by impartial consideration; and, afterward, whether they will act as the case requires, upon the evidence which they have. And this we find by experience, is often our probation in our temporal capacity."*

II. These modes of communication would leave no place for the admission of *internal evidence;* which ought, perhaps, to bear a considerable part in the proof of every revelation, because it is a species of evidence, which applies itself to the knowledge, love, and practice of virtue, and which operates in proportion to the degree of those qualities which it finds in the person whom it addresses. Men of good dispositions, amongst Christians, are greatly affected by the impression which the Scriptures themselves make upon their minds. Their conviction is much strengthened by these impressions. And this perhaps was intended to be one effect to be produced by the religion. It is likewise true, to whatever cause we ascribe it (for I am not in this work at liberty to introduce the Christian doctrine of grace or assistance, or the Christian promise, that, "if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God,"*)—it is true, I say, that they who sincerely act, or sincerely endeavour to act, *according* to what they believe, that is, according to the just result of the probabilities, or, if you please, the possibilities of natural and revealed religion, which they themselves perceive, and according to a rational estimate of consequences, and above all, according to the just effect of those principles of gratitude and devotion, which even the view of nature generates in a well ordered mind, *seldom fail of proceeding farther.* This also may have been exactly what was designed.

Whereas, may it not be said that irresistible evidence would confound all characters and all dispositions? would subvert, rather than promote, the true purpose of the divine counsels; which is, not to produce *obedience* by a force little short of mechanical constraint, (which obedience would be regularity, not virtue, and would hardly, perhaps, differ from that which inanimate bodies pay to the laws impressed upon their nature,) but to treat moral agents agreeably to what they are; which is done, when light and motives are of such kinds, and are imparted in such measures, that the influence of them depends upon the recipients themselves? "It is not meet to govern rational free agents *in viâ* by sight and sense. It would be no trial or thanks to the most sensual wretch to forbear sinning, if heaven and hell were open to his sight. That spiritual vision and fruition is our state *in patriâ.*" (Baxter's Reasons, page 357.) —There may be truth in this thought, though roughly expressed. Few things are more improbable than that we (the human species) should be the highest order of beings in the universe: that animated nature should ascend from the lowest reptile to us, and all at once stop there. If there be classes above us of rational intelligences, clearer manifestations may belong to them. This may be one of the distinctions. And it may be one, to which we ourselves hereafter shall attain.

III. But may it not also be asked, whether the perfect display of a future state of existence would be compatible with the activity of civil life, and with the success of human affairs? I can easily conceive that this impression may be overdone; that it may so seize and fill the thoughts, as to leave no place for the cares and offices of men's several stations, no anxiety for worldly prosperity, or even for a worldly provision, and, by consequence, no sufficient stimulus to secular industry. Of the first Christians we read, "that all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need; and, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."† This was extremely natural, and just what might be expected from miraculous evidence coming with full force upon the senses of mankind: but I much doubt whether, if this state of mind had been universal, or long-continued, the business of the world could have gone on. The necessary arts of social life would have been little cultivated. The plough and the loom would have stood still. Agriculture, manufactures, trade, and navigation, would not, I think, have flourished, if they could

* Butler's Analogy, part ii. c. vi.

* John vii. 17.

† Acts ii. 44—46.

have been exercised at all. Men would have addicted themselves to contemplative and ascetic lives, instead of lives of business and of useful industry. We observe that Saint Paul found it necessary, frequently to recall his converts to the ordinary labours and domestic duties of their condition; and to give them, in his own example, a lesson of contented application to their worldly employments.

By the manner in which the religion is now proposed, a great portion of the human species is enabled, and of these multitudes of every generation are induced, to seek and to effectuate their salvation, through the medium of Christianity, without interruption of the prosperity or of the regular course of human affairs.

CHAPTER VII.

The supposed effects of Christianity.

That a religion, which, under every form in which it is taught, holds forth the final reward of virtue and punishment of vice, and proposes those distinctions of virtue and vice, which the wisest and most cultivated part of mankind confess to be just, should not be believed, is very possible; but that, so far as it is believed, it should not produce any good, but rather a bad effect upon public happiness, is a proposition which it requires very strong evidence to render credible. Yet many have been found to contend for this paradox, and very confident appeals have been made to history, and to observation, for the truth of it.

In the conclusions, however, which these writers draw from what they call experience, two sources, I think, of mistake, may be perceived.

One is, that they look for the influence of religion in the wrong place.

The other, that they charge Christianity with many consequences, for which it is not responsible.

I. The influence of religion is not to be sought for in the councils of princes, in the debates or resolutions of popular assemblies, in the conduct of governments towards their subjects, or of states and sovereigns towards one another; of conquerors at the head of their armies, or of parties intriguing for power at home, (topics which alone almost occupy the attention, and fill the pages of history;) but must be perceived, if perceived at all, in the silent course of private and domestic life. Nay more; even *there* its influence may not be very obvious to observation. If it check, in some degree, personal dissoluteness, if it beget a general probity in the transaction of business, if it produce soft and humane manners in the mass of the community, and occasional exertions of laborious and expensive benevolence in a few individuals, it is all the effect which can offer itself to external notice. The kingdom of heaven is within us. That which is the substance of the religion, its hopes and consolations, its intermixture with the thoughts by day and by night, the devotion of the heart, the control of appetite, the steady direction of the will to the commands of God, is necessarily invisible. Yet upon these depend the virtue and happiness of millions. This cause renders the representations of history, with respect to religion, defective and fallacious, in a greater degree than they are upon any other subject. Religion operates most upon those of whom history knows the least; upon fathers and mothers in their families, upon men-servants and maid-servants, upon the orderly tradesman, the quiet villager, the manufacturer at his loom, the husbandman in his fields. Amongst such, its influence collectively may be of inestimable value, yet its effects, in the mean time, little upon those who figure upon the stage of the world. *They* may know nothing of it; they may believe nothing of it; they may be actuated by motives more impetuous than those which religion is able to excite. It cannot, therefore, be thought strange, that this influence should elude the grasp and touch of public history: for, what is public history, but a register of the successes and disappointments, the vices, the follies, and the quarrels, of those who engage in contentions for power?

I will add, that much of this influence may be felt in times of public distress, and little of it in times of public wealth and security. This also increases the uncertainty of any opinions that we draw from historical representations. The influence of Christianity is commensurate with no effects which history states. We do not pretend that it has any such necessary and irresistible power over the affairs of nations, as to surmount the force of other causes.

The Christian religion also acts upon public usages and institutions, by an operation which is only secondary and indirect. Christianity is not a code of civil law. It can only reach public institutions through private character. Now its influence upon private character may be considerable, yet many public usages and institutions repugnant to its principles may remain. To get rid of these, the reigning part of the community must act, and act together. But it may be long before the persons who compose this body be sufficiently touched with the Christian character, to join in the suppression of practices, to which they and the public have been reconciled by causes which will reconcile the human mind to any thing, by habit and interest. Nevertheless, the effects of Christianity, even in this view, have been important. It has mitigated the conduct of war, and the treatment of captives. It has softened the administration of despotic, or of nominally despotic governments. It has abolished polygamy. It has restrained the licentiousness of divorces. It has put an end to the exposure of children, and the immolation of slaves. It has suppressed the combats of gladiators,* and the impurities of religious rites. It has banished, if not unnatural vices, at least the toleration of them. It has greatly meliorated the condition of the laborious part, that is to say, of the mass of every community, by procuring for them a day of weekly rest. In all countries in which it is professed, it has produced numerous establishments for the relief of sickness and poverty; and, in some, a regular and general provision by law. It has triumphed over the slavery established in the Roman empire; it is contending, and, I trust, will one day prevail, against the worse slavery of the West Indies.

* Lipsius affirms, (Sat. b. i. c. 12,) that the gladiatorial shows sometimes cost Europe twenty or thirty thousand lives in a month; and that not only the men, but even the women of all ranks were passionately fond of these shows.—See Bishop Porteus's Sermon XIII.

A Christian writer,* so early as in the second century, has testified the resistance which Christianity made to wicked and licentious practices, though established by law and by public usage:—"Neither in Parthia, do the Christians, though Parthians, use polygamy; nor in Persia, though Persians, do they marry their own daughters; nor among the Bactri, or Galli, do they violate the sanctity of marriage; nor, wherever they are, do they suffer themselves to be overcome by ill-constituted laws and manners."

Socrates did not destroy the idolatry of Athens, or produce the slightest revolution in the manners of his country.

But the argument to which I recur, is, that the benefit of religion, being felt chiefly in the obscurity of private stations, necessarily escapes the observation of history. From the first general notification of Christianity to the present day, there have been in every age many millions, whose names were never heard of, made better by it, not only in their conduct, but in their disposition; and happier, not so much in their external circumstances, as in that which is *inter præcordia*, in that which alone deserves the name of happiness, the tranquillity and consolation of their thoughts. It has been since its commencement, the author of happiness and virtue to millions and millions of the human race. Who is there that would not wish his son to be a Christian?

Christianity also, in every country in which it is professed, hath obtained a sensible, although not a complete influence, upon the public judgment of morals. And this is very important. For without the occasional correction which public opinion receives, by referring to some fixed standard of morality, no man can foretell into what extravagances it might wander. Assassination might become as honourable as duelling; unnatural crimes be accounted as venial as fornication is wont to be accounted. In this way it is possible, that many may be kept in order by Christianity, who are not themselves Christians. They may be guided by the rectitude which it communicates to public opinion. Their consciences may suggest their duty truly, and they may ascribe these suggestions to a moral sense, or to the native capacity of the human intellect, when in fact they are nothing more than the public opinion, reflected from their own minds; and opinion, in a considerable degree, modified by the lessons of Christianity. "Certain it is, and this is a great deal to say, that the generality, even of the meanest and most vulgar and ignorant people, have truer and worthier notions of God, more just and right apprehensions concerning his attributes and perfections, a deeper sense of the difference of good and evil, a greater regard to moral obligations, and to the plain and most necessary duties of life, and a more firm and universal expectation of a future state of rewards and punishments, than, in any Heathen country, any considerable number of men were found to have had."†

After all, the value of Christianity is not to be appreciated by its *temporal* effects. The object of revelation is to influence human conduct in this life; but what is gained to happiness by that influence, can only be estimated by taking in the whole of human existence. Then, as hath already been observed, there may be also great consequences of Christianity, which do not belong to it as a revelation. The effects upon human salvation, of the mission, of the death, of the present, of the future agency of Christ, may be universal, though the religion be not universally known.

Secondly, I assert that Christianity is charged with many consequences for which it is not responsible. I believe that religious motives have had no more to do in the formation of nine tenths of the intolerant and persecuting laws, which in different countries have been established upon the subject of religion, than they have had to do in England with the making of the game-laws. These measures, although they have the Christian religion for their subject, are resolvable into a principle which Christianity certainly did not plant (and which Christianity could not universally condemn, because it is not universally wrong), which principle is no other than this, that they who are in possession of power do what they can to keep it. Christianity is answerable for no part of the mischief which has been brought upon the world by persecution, except that which has arisen from *conscientious* persecutors. Now these perhaps have never been either numerous or powerful. Nor is it to Christianity that even *their* mistake can fairly be imputed. They have been misled by an error not properly Christian or religious, but by an error in their moral philosophy. They pursued the particular, without adverting to the general consequence. Believing certain articles of faith, or a certain mode of worship, to be highly conducive, or perhaps essential, to salvation, they thought themselves bound to bring all they could, by every means, into them. And this they thought, without considering what would be the effect of such a conclusion, when adopted amongst mankind as a general rule of conduct. Had there been in the New Testament, what there are in the Koran, precepts authorizing coercion in the propagation of the religion, and the use of violence towards unbelievers, the case would have been different. This distinction could not have been taken, nor this defence made.

I apologize for no species nor degree of persecution, but I think that even the fact has been exaggerated. The slave-trade destroys more in a year, than the inquisition does in a hundred, or perhaps hath done since its foundation.

If it be objected, as I apprehend it will be, that Christianity is chargeable with every mischief, of which it has been the *occasion*, though not the motive; I answer, that, if the malevolent passions be there, the world will never want occasions. The noxious element will always find a conductor. Any point will produce an explosion. Did the applauded intercommunity of the Pagan theology preserve the peace of the Roman world? did it prevent oppressions, proscriptions, massacres, devastations? Was it bigotry that carried Alexander into the East, or brought Cæsar into Gaul? Are the nations of the world, into which Christianity hath not found its way, or from which it hath been banished, free from contentions? Are their contentions less ruinous and sanguinary? Is it owing to Christianity, or to the want of it, that the finest regions of the East, the countries *inter quatuor maria*, the peninsula of Greece, together with a great part of the Mediterranean coast, are at this day a desert? or that the banks of the Nile, whose constantly re-

* Bardesanes, ap. Euseb. Præp. Evang. vi. 10.
† Clarke, Ev. Nat. Rel. p. 208. ed. v.

newed fertility is not to be impaired by neglect, or destroyed by the ravages of war, serve only for the scene of a ferocious anarchy, or the supply of unceasing hostilities? Europe itself has known no religious wars for some centuries, yet has hardly ever been without war. Are the calamities, which at this day afflict it, to be imputed to Christianity? Hath Poland fallen by a Christian crusade? Hath the overthrow in France of civil order and security, been effected by the votaries of our religion, or by the foes? Amongst the awful lessons which the crimes and the miseries of that country afford to mankind, this is one: that, in order to be a persecutor, it is not necessary to be a bigot; that in rage and cruelty, in mischief and destruction, fanaticism itself can be outdone by infidelity.

Finally, If war, as it is now carried on between nations, produces less misery and ruin than formerly, we are indebted perhaps to Christianity for the change, more than to any other cause. Viewed therefore even in its relation to this subject, it appears to have been of advantage to the world. It hath humanized the conduct of wars: it hath ceased to excite them.

The differences of opinion, that have in all ages prevailed amongst Christians, fall very much within the alternative which has been stated. If we possessed the disposition which Christianity labours, above all other qualities to inculcate, these differences would do little harm. If that disposition be wanting, other causes, even were these absent, would continually rise up to call forth the malevolent passions into action. Differences of opinions, when accompanied with mutual charity, which Christianity forbids them to violate, are for the most part innocent, and for some purposes useful. They promote inquiry, discussion, and knowledge. They help to keep up an attention to religious subjects, and a concern about them, which might be apt to die away in the calm and silence of universal agreement. I do not know that it is in any degree true, that the influence of religion is the greatest, where there are the fewest dissenters.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Conclusion.

In religion, as in every other subject of human reasoning, much depends upon the *order* in which we dispose our inquiries. A man who takes up a system of divinity with a previous opinion that either every part must be true, or the whole false, approaches the discussion with great disadvantage. No other system, which is founded upon moral evidence, would bear to be treated in the same manner. Nevertheless, in a certain degree, we are all introduced to our religious studies, under this prejudication. And it cannot be avoided. The weakness of the human judgment in the early part of youth, yet its extreme susceptibility of impression, renders it necessary to furnish it with some opinions, and with some principles or other. Or indeed, without much express care, or much endeavour for this purpose, the tendency of the mind of man to assimilate itself to the habits of thinking and speaking which prevails around him, produces the same effect. That indifferency and suspense, that waiting and equilibrium of the judgment, which some require in religious matters, and which some would wish to be aimed at in the conduct of education, are impossible to be preserved. They are not given to the condition of human life.

It is a consequence of this institution that the doctrines of religion come to us before the proofs; and come to us with that mixture of explications and inferences from which no public creed is, or can be, free. And the effect which too frequently follows, from Christianity being presented to the understanding in this form, is, that when any articles, which appear as parts of it, contradict the apprehension of the persons to whom it is proposed, men of rash and confident tempers hastily and indiscriminately reject the whole. But is this to do justice, either to themselves or to the religion? The rational way of treating a subject of such acknowledged importance is to attend, in the first place, to the general and substantial truth of its principles, and to that alone. When we once feel a foundation; when we once perceive a ground of credibility in its history, we shall proceed with safety to inquire into the interpretation of its records, and into the doctrines which have been deduced from them. Nor will it either endanger our faith, or diminish or alter our motives for obedience, if we should discover that these conclusions are formed with very different degrees of probability, and possess very different degrees of importance.

This conduct of the understanding, dictated by every rule of right reasoning, will uphold personal Christianity, even in those countries in which it is established under forms the most liable to difficulty and objection. It will also have the farther effect of guarding us against the prejudices which are wont to arise in our minds to the disadvantage of religion, from observing the numerous controversies which are carried on amongst its professors, and likewise of inducing a spirit of lenity and moderation in our judgment, as well as in our treatment of those who stand, in such controversies, upon sides opposite to ours. What is clear in Christianity, we shall find to be sufficient, and to be infinitely valuable; what is dubious, unnecessary to be decided, or of very subordinate importance; and what is most obscure, will teach us to bear with the opinions which others may have formed upon the same subject. We shall say to those who the most widely dissent from us, what Augustine said to the worst heretics of his age: "Illi in vos sæviant, qui nesciunt, cum quo labore verum inveniatur, et quàm difficilè caveantur errores;—qui nesciunt, cum quantâ difficultate sanetur oculus interioris hominis;—qui nesciunt, quibus suspiriis et gemitibus fiat ut ex quantulâcunque parte possit intelligi Deus."*

A judgment, moreover, which is once pretty well satisfied of the general truth of the religion, will not only thus discriminate in its doctrines, but will possess sufficient strength to overcome the reluctance of the imagination to admit articles of faith which are attended with difficulty of apprehension, if such articles of faith appear to be truly parts of the revelation. It was to be expected beforehand, that what related to the economy, and to the persons, of the invisible world, which revelation professes to do, and which, if true, it

* Aug. contra Ep. Fund. cap. ii. n. 3, 3.

actually does, should contain some points remote from our analogies, and from the comprehension of a mind which hath acquired all its ideas from sense and from experience.

It hath been my care, in the preceding work, to preserve the separation between evidences and doctrines as inviolable as I could; to remove from the primary question all considerations which have been unnecessarily joined with it; and to offer a defence to Christianity, which every Christian might read, without seeing the tenets in which he had been brought up attacked or decried: and it always afforded a satisfaction to my mind to observe that this was practicable; that few or none of our many controversies with one another affect or relate to the proofs of our religion; that the rent never descends to the foundation.

The truth of Christianity depends upon its leading facts, and upon them alone. Now of these we have evidence which ought to satisfy us, at least until it appear that mankind have ever been deceived by the same. We have some uncontested and incontestable points, to which the history of the human species have nothing similar to offer. A Jewish peasant changed the religion of the world, and that, without force, without power, without support; without one natural source, or circumstance of attraction, influence, or success. Such a thing hath not happened in any other instance. The companions of this Person, after he himself had been put to death for his attempt, asserted his supernatural character, founded upon his supernatural operations: and, in testimony of the truth of their assertions, *i. e.* in consequence of their own belief of that truth, and in order to communicate their knowledge of it to others, voluntarily entered upon lives of toil and hardship, and with a full experience of their danger, committed themselves to the last extremities of persecution. This hath not a parallel. More particularly, a very few days after this Person had been publicly executed, and in the very city in which he was buried, these his companions declared with one voice that his body was restored to life; that they had seen him, handled him, ate with him; conversed with him; and, in pursuance of their persuasion of the truth of what they told, preached his religion, with this strange fact as the foundation of it, in the face of those who had killed him, who were armed with the power of the country, and necessarily and naturally disposed to treat his followers as they had treated himself; and having done this upon the spot where the event took place, carried the intelligence of it abroad, in despite of difficulties and opposition, and where the nature of their errand gave them nothing to expect but derision, insult, and outrage. —This is without example. These three facts, I think, are certain, and would have been nearly so, if the Gospels had never been written. The Christian story, as to these points, hath never varied. No other hath been set up against it. Every letter, every discourse, every controversy, amongst the followers of the religion; every book written by them, from the age of its commencement to the present time, in every part of the world in which it hath been professed, and with every sect into which it hath been divided (and we have letters and discourses written by contemporaries, by witnesses of the transaction, by persons themselves bearing a share in it, and other writings following that age in regular succession,) *concur* in representing these facts in this manner. A religion, which now possesses the greatest part of the civilized world, unquestionably sprang up at Jerusalem at this time. Some account must be given of its origin; some cause assigned for its rise. All the accounts of this origin, all the explications of this cause, whether taken from the writings of the early followers of the religion (in which, and in which perhaps alone, it could be expected that they should be distinctly unfolded,) or from occasional notices in other writings of that or the adjoining age, either expressly allege the facts above stated as the means by which the religion was set up, or advert to its commencement in a manner which agrees with the supposition of these facts being true, and which testifies their operation and effects.

These propositions alone lay a foundation for our faith; for they prove the existence of a transaction, which cannot even in its most *general* parts be accounted for, upon any reasonable supposition, except that of the truth of the mission. But the particulars, the *detail* of the miracles or miraculous pretences (for such there necessarily must have been,) upon which this unexampled transaction rested, and *for* which these men acted and suffered as they did act and suffer, it is undoubtedly of great importance to us to know. We *have* this detail from the fountain-head, from the persons themselves; in accounts written by eyewitnesses of the scene, by contemporaries and companions of those who were so; not in one book, but four, each containing enough for the verification of the religion, all agreeing in the fundamental parts of the history. We have the authenticity of these books established, by more and stronger proofs than belong to almost any other ancient book whatever, and by proofs which widely distinguish them from any others claiming a similar authority to theirs. If there were any good reason for doubt concerning the names to which these books are ascribed, (which there is not, for they were never ascribed to any other, and we have evidence not long after their publication of their bearing the names which they now bear,) their antiquity, of which there is no question, their reputation and authority amongst the early disciples of the religion, of which there is as little, form a valid proof that they must, in the main at least, have agreed with what the first teachers of the religion delivered.

When we open these ancient volumes, we discover in them marks of truth, whether we consider each in itself, or collate them with one another. The writers certainly knew something of what they were writing about, for they manifest an acquaintance with local circumstances, with the history and usages of the times, which could only belong to an inhabitant of that country, living in that age. In every narrative we perceive simplicity and undesignedness; the air and the language of reality. When we compare the different narratives together, we find them so varying as to repel all suspicion of confederacy; so agreeing under this variety, as to show that the accounts had one real transaction for their common foundation; often attributing different actions and discourses to the person whose history, or rather memoirs of whose history, they profess to relate, yet actions and discourses so similar, as very much to bespeak the same character; which is a coincidence, that, in such writers as they were, could only be the

consequence of their writing from fact, and not from imagination.

These four narratives are confined to the history of the Founder of the religion, and end with his ministry. Since, however, it is certain that the affair went on, we cannot help being anxious to know *how* it proceeded. This intelligence hath come down to us in a work purporting to be written by a person, himself connected with the business during the first stages of its progress, taking up the story where the former histories had left it, carrying on the narrative, oftentimes with great particularity, and throughout with the appearance of good sense,* information, and candour; stating all along the origin, and the only probable origin, of effects which unquestionably were produced, together with the natural consequences of situations which unquestionably did exist; and *confirmed*, in the substance at least of the account, by the strongest possible accession of testimony which a history can receive, *original letters*, written by the person who is the principal subject of the history, written upon the business to which the history relates, and during the period, or soon after the period, which the history comprises. No man can say that this all together is not a body of strong historical evidence.

When we reflect that some of those from whom the books proceeded, are related to have themselves wrought miracles, to have been the subject of miracles, or of supernatural assistance in propagating the religion, we may perhaps be led to think, that more credit, or a different kind of credit, is due to these accounts, than what can be claimed by merely human testimony. But this is an argument which cannot be addressed to sceptics or unbelievers. A man must be a Christian before he can receive it. The inspiration of the historical Scriptures, the nature, degree, and extent of that inspiration, are questions undoubtedly of serious discussion; but they are questions amongst Christians themselves, and not between them and others. The doctrine itself is by no means necessary to the belief of Christianity, which must, in the first instance at least, depend upon the ordinary maxims of historical credibility.†

In viewing the detail of miracles recorded in these books, we find every supposition negatived, by which they can be resolved into fraud or delusion. They were not secret, not momentary, not tentative, nor ambiguous; nor performed under the sanction of authority, with the spectators on their side, or in affirmance of tenets and practices already established. We find also the evidence alleged for them, and which evidence was by great numbers received, different from that upon which other miraculous accounts rest. It was contemporary, it was published upon the spot, it continued; it involved interests and questions of the greatest magnitude; it contradicted the most fixed persuasions and prejudices of the persons to whom it was addressed; it required from those who accepted it, not a simple, indolent assent, but a change, from thenceforward, of principles and conduct, a submission to consequences the most serious and the most deterring, to loss and danger, to insult, outrage, and persecution. How such a story should be false, or, if false, how under such circumstances it should make its way, I think impossible to be explained; yet such the Christian story was, such were the circumstances under which it came forth, and in opposition to such difficulties did it prevail.

An event so connected with the religion, and with the fortunes, of the Jewish people, as one of their race, one born amongst them, establishing his authority and his law throughout a great portion of the civilized world, it was perhaps to be expected, should be noticed in the prophetic writings of that nation; especially when this Person, together with his own mission, caused also to be acknowledged the divine original of their institution, and by those who before had altogether rejected it. Accordingly, we perceive in these writings various intimations *concurring* in the person and history of Jesus, in a manner, and in a degree, in which passages taken from these books could not be made to concur in any person arbitrarily assumed, or in any person except him who has been the author of great changes in the affairs and opinions of mankind. Of some of these predictions the weight depends a good deal upon the concurrence. Others possess great separate strength: one in particular does this in an eminent degree. It is an entire description, manifestly directed to one character and to one scene of things: it is extant in a writing, or collection of writings, declaredly prophetic; and it applies to Christ's character, and to the circumstances of his life and death, with considerable precision, and in a way which no diversity of interpretation hath, in my opinion, been able to confound. That the advent of Christ, and the consequences of it should not have been more distinctly revealed in the Jewish sacred books, is, I think, in some measure accounted for by the consideration, that for the Jews to have foreseen the fall of their institution, and that it was to emerge at length into a more perfect and comprehensive dispensation, would have cooled too much, and relaxed their zeal for it, and their adherence to it, upon which zeal and adherence the preservation in the world of any remains, for many ages, of religious truth might in a great measure depend.

Of what a revelation discloses to mankind, one, and only one, question can properly be asked, Was it of importance to mankind to know, or to be better assured of? In this question, when we turn our thoughts to the great Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of a future judgment, no doubt can possibly be entertained. He who gives me riches or honours, does nothing; he who even gives me health, does little in comparison with that which lays before me just grounds for expecting a restoration to life, and a day of account and retribution: which thing Christianity hath done for millions.

Other articles of the Christian faith, although of infinite importance when placed beside any other topic of human inquiry, are only the adjuncts and circumstances of this. They are, however, such as appear worthy of the original to which we ascribe them. The morality of the religion, whether taken from the precepts or the example of its Founder, or from the lessons of its primitive teachers, derived, as it should seem, from what had been inculcated by their Master, is, in all its parts, wise and pure; neither adapted to vulgar

* See Peter's speech upon curing the cripple, (Acts iii. 18,) the council of the apostles, (xv,) Paul's discourse at Athens (xvii. 22,) before Agrippa. (xxvi.) I notice these passages, both as fraught with good sense, and as free from the smallest tincture of enthusiasm.

† See Powel's Discourses, disc. xv. p. 245.

prejudices, nor flattering popular notions, nor excusing established practices, but calculated, in the matter of its instruction, truly to promote human happiness, and in the form in which it was conveyed, to produce impression and effect; a morality, which, let it have proceeded from any person whatever, would have been satisfactory evidence of his good sense and integrity, of the soundness of his understanding and the probity of his designs; a morality, in every view of it, much more perfect than could have been expected from the natural circumstances and character of the person who delivered it; a morality, in a word, which is, and hath been, most beneficial to mankind.

Upon the greatest, therefore, of all possible occasions, and for a purpose of inestimable value, it pleased the Deity to vouchsafe a miraculous attestation. Having done this for the institution, when this alone could fix its authority, or give to it a beginning, he committed its future progress to the natural means of human communication, and to the influence of those causes by which human conduct and human affairs are governed. The seed, being sown, was left to vegetate; the leaven, being inserted, was left to ferment; and both according to the laws of nature: laws, nevertheless, disposed and controlled by that Providence which conducts the affairs of the universe, though by an influence inscrutable, and generally undistinguishable by us. And in this Christianity is analogous to most other provisions for happiness. The provision is made; and, being made, is left to act according to laws, which, forming a part of a more general system, regulate this particular subject, in common with many others.

Let the constant recurrence to our observation of contrivance, design, and wisdom, in the works of nature, once fix upon our minds the belief of a God, and after that all is easy. In the counsels of a being possessed of the power and disposition which the Creator of the universe must possess, it is not improbable that there should be a future state; it is not improbable that we should be acquainted with it. A future state rectifies every thing: because, if moral agents be made, in the last event, happy or miserable, according to their conduct in the stations and under the circumstances in which they are placed, it seems not very material by the operation of what causes, according to what rules, or even, if you please to call it so, by what chance or caprice, these stations are assigned, or these circumstances determined. This hypothesis, therefore, solves all that objection to the divine care and goodness, which the promiscuous distribution of good and evil (I do not mean in the doubtful advantages of riches and grandeur, but in the unquestionably important distinctions of health and sickness, strength and infirmity, bodily ease and pain, mental alacrity and depression) is apt on so many occasions to create. This one truth changes the nature of things; gives order to confusion; makes the moral world of a piece with the natural.

Nevertheless, a higher degree of assurance than that to which it is possible to advance this, or any argument drawn from the light of nature, was necessary, especially to overcome the shock which the imagination and the senses receive from the effects and the appearances of death, and the obstruction which thence arises to the expectation of either a continued or a future existence. This difficulty, although of a nature, no doubt, to act very forcibly, will be found, I think, upon reflection, to reside more in our habits of apprehension, than in the subject; and that the giving way to it, when we have any reasonable grounds for the contrary, is rather an indulging of the imagination, than any thing else. Abstractedly considered, that is, considered without relation to the difference which habit, and merely habit, produces in our faculties and modes of apprehension, I do not see any thing more in the resurrection of a dead man, than in the conception of a child; except it be this, that the one comes into his world with a system of prior consciousnesses about him, which the other does not: and no person will say, that he knows enough of either subject to perceive, that this circumstance makes such a difference in the two cases, that the one should be easy, and the other impossible; the one natural, the other not so. To the first man, the succession of the species would be as incomprehensible, as the resurrection of the dead is to us.

Thought is different from motion, perception from impact: the individuality of a mind is hardly consistent with the divisibility of an extended substance; or its volition, that is, its power of originating motion, with the inertness which cleaves to every portion of matter which our observation or our experiments can reach. These distinctions lead us to an *immaterial* principle: at least, they do this; they so negative the mechanical properties of matter, in the constitution of a sentient, still more of a rational being, that no argument drawn from these properties, can be of any great weight in opposition to other reasons, when the question respects the changes of which such a nature is capable, or the manner in which these changes are effected. Whatever thought be, or whatever it depend upon, the regular experience of *sleep* makes one thing concerning it certain, that it can be completely suspended, and completely restored.

If any one find it too great a strain upon his thoughts, to admit the notion of a substance strictly immaterial, that is, from which extension and solidity are excluded, he can find no difficulty in allowing that a particle as small as a particle of light, minuter than all conceivable dimensions, may just as easily be the depositary, the organ, and the vehicle, of consciousness, as the congeries of animal substance which forms a human body, or the human brain; that, being so, it may transfer a proper identity to whatever shall hereafter be united to it; may be safe amidst the destruction of its integuments; may connect the natural with the spiritual, the corruptible with the glorified body. If it be said, that the mode and means of all this is imperceptible by our senses, it is only what is true of the most important agencies and operations. The great powers of nature are all invisible. Gravitation, electricity, magnetism, though constantly present, and constantly exerting their influence; though within us, near us, and about us; though diffused throughout all space, overspreading the surface, or penetrating the contexture, of all bodies with which we are acquainted, depend upon substances and actions which are totally concealed from our senses. The Supreme Intelligence is so himself.

But whether these or any other attempts to satisfy the imagination, bear any resemblance to the truth, or whether the imagination, which, as I have said before, is a mere slave of habit, *can* be

satisfied or not; when a future state, and the revelation of a future state, is not only perfectly consistent with the attributes of the Being who governs the universe; but when it is more, when it alone removes the appearances of contrariety which attend the operations of his will towards creatures capable of comparative merit and demerit, of reward and punishment; when a strong body of historical evidence, confirmed by many internal tokens of truth and authenticity, gives us just reason to believe that such a revelation hath actually been made; we ought to set our minds at rest with the assurance, that in the resources of Creative Wisdom, expedients cannot be wanted to carry into effect what the Deity hath purposed: that either a new and mighty influence will descend upon the human world to resuscitate extinguished consciousness; or that amidst the other wonderful contrivances with which the universe abounds, and by some of which we see animal life, in many instances, assuming improved forms of existence, acquiring new organs, new perceptions, and new sources of enjoyment, provision is also made, though by methods secret to us (as all the great processes of nature are,) for conducting the objects of God's moral government, through the necessary changes of their frame, to those final distinctions of happiness and misery, which he hath declared to be reserved for obedience and transgression, for virtue and vice, for the use and the neglect, the right and the wrong employment, of the faculties and opportunities with which he hath been pleased, severally, to intrust, and to try us.

NATURAL THEOLOGY.

TO THE HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REV. SHUTE BARRINGTON, L.L.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

My Lord,—*The following Work was undertaken at your Lordship's recommendation, and, amongst other motives, for the purpose of making the most acceptable return that I could, for a great and important benefit conferred upon me.*

It may be unnecessary, yet not perhaps quite impertinent, to state to your Lordship, and to the reader, the several inducements that have led me once more to the press. The favour of my first and ever-honoured Patron had put me in possession of so liberal a provision in the Church, as abundantly to satisfy my wants, and much to exceed my pretensions. Your Lordship's munificence, in conjunction with that of some other excellent Prelates, who regarded my services with the partiality with which your Lordship was pleased to consider them, hath since placed me in ecclesiastical situations, more than adequate to every object of reasonable ambition. In the mean time, a weak, and, of late, a painful state of health, deprived me of the power of discharging the duties of my station in a manner at all suitable, either to my sense of those duties, or to my most anxious wishes concerning them. My inability for the public functions of my profession, amongst other consequences, left me much at leisure. That leisure was not to be lost. It was only in my study that I could repair my deficiencies in the church: it was only through the press that I could speak. These circumstances entitled your Lordship in particular to call upon me for the only species of exertion of which I was capable, and disposed me without hesitation to obey the call in the best manner that I could. In the choice of a subject, I had no place left for doubt: in saying which, I do not so much refer, either to the supreme importance of the subject, or to any scepticism concerning it with which the present times are charged, as I do to its connexion with the subjects treated of in my former publications. The following discussion alone was wanted to make up my works into a system: in which works, such as they are, the public have now before them, the evidences of Natural Religion, the evidences of Revealed Religion, and an account of the duties that result from both. It is of small importance that they have been written in an order the very reverse of that in which they ought to be read. I commend, therefore, the present volume to your Lordship's protection, not only as, in all probability, my last labour, but as the completion of a regular and comprehensive design.

Hitherto, my Lord, I have been speaking of myself, and not of my Patron. Your Lordship wants not the testimony of a Dedication; nor any testimony from me: I consult therefore the impulse of my own mind alone when I declare, that in no respect has my intercourse with your Lordship been more gratifying to me, than in the opportunities which it has afforded me, of observing your earnest, active, and unwearied solicitude, for the advancement of substantial Christianity; a solicitude, nevertheless, accompanied with that candour of mind, which suffers no subordinate differences of opinion, when there is a coincidence in the main intention and object, to produce any alienation of esteem, or diminution of favour. It is fortunate for a country, and honourable to its government, when qualities and dispositions like these are placed in high and influencing stations. Such is the sincere judgment which I have formed of your Lordship's character, and of its public value: my personal obligations I can never forget. Under a due sense of both these considerations, I beg leave to subscribe myself, with great respect and gratitude, My Lord, *your Lordship's faithful and most devoted servant,*

WILLIAM PALEY.

Bishop-Wearmouth, July, 1802.

CHAPTER I.

State of the Argument.

In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a *stone*, and were asked how the stone came to be there: I might possibly answer, that for any thing I knew to the contrary, it had lain there for ever: nor would it perhaps be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a *watch* upon the ground, and

it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place; I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that for any thing I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? why is it not as admissable in the second case as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, *viz.* that when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, *e. g.* that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that, if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, of a different size from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order, than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would have answered the use that is now served by it. To reckon up a few of the plainest of these parts, and of their offices, all tending to one result:—We see a cylindrical box containing a coiled elastic spring, which, by its endeavour to relax itself, turns round the box. We next observe a flexible chain (artificially wrought for the sake of flexure,) communicating the action of the spring from the box to the fusee. We then find a series of wheels, the teeth of which catch in, and apply to each other, conducting the motion from the fusee to the balance, and from the balance to the pointer; and at the same time, by the size and shape of those wheels so regulating that motion, as to terminate in causing an index, by an equable and measured progression, to pass over a given space in a given time. We take notice that the wheels are made of brass in order to keep them from rust; the springs of steel, no other metal being so elastic; that over the face of the watch there is placed a glass, a material employed in no other part of the work, but in the room of which, if there had been any other than a transparent substance, the hour could not be seen without opening the case. This mechanism being observed (it requires indeed an examination of the instrument, and perhaps some previous knowledge of the subject, to perceive and understand it; but being once, as we have said, observed and understood,) the inference, we think, is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker; that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers, who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use.

I. Nor would it, I apprehend, weaken the conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made; that we had never known an artist capable of making one; that we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves, or of understanding in what manner it was performed; all this being no more than what is true of some exquisite remains of ancient art, of some lost arts, and, to the generality of mankind, of the more curious productions of modern manufacture. Does one man in a million know how oval frames are turned? Ignorance of this kind exalts our opinion of the unseen and unknown artist's skill if he be unseen and unknown, but raises no doubt in our minds of the existence and agency of such an artist, at some former time, and in some place or other. Nor can I perceive that it varies at all the inference, whether the question arise concerning a human agent, or concerning an agent of a different species, or an agent possessing in some respects a different nature.

II. Neither, secondly, would it invalidate our conclusion, that the watch sometimes went wrong, or that it seldom went exactly right. The purpose of the machinery, the design and the designer, might be evident, and in the case supposed would be evident, in whatever way we accounted for the irregularity of the movement, or whether we could account for it or not. It is not necessary that a machine be perfect, in order to show with what design it was made; still less necessary, where the only question is, whether it were made with any design at all.

III. Nor, thirdly, would it bring any uncertainty into the argument, if there were a few parts of the watch, concerning which we could not discover, or had not yet discovered, in what manner they conduced to the general effect, or even some parts, concerning which we could not ascertain, whether they conduced to that effect in any manner whatever. For, as to the first branch of the case; if by the loss, or disorder, or decay, of the parts in question, the movement of the watch were found in fact to be stopped, or disturbed, or retarded, no doubt would remain in our minds as to the utility or intention of these parts, although we should be unable to investigate the manner according to which, or the connexion by which, the ultimate effect depended upon their action or assistance; and the more complex is the machine, the more likely is this obscurity to arise. Then, as to the second thing supposed, namely, that there were parts which might be spared, without prejudice to the movement of the watch, and that we had proved this by experiment,—these superfluous parts, even if we were completely assured that they were such, would not vacate the reasoning which we had instituted concerning other parts. The indication of contrivance remained, with respect to them, nearly as it was before.

IV. Nor, fourthly, would any man in his senses think the existence of the watch, with its various machinery, accounted for, by being told that it was one out of possible combinations of material forms; that whatever he had found in the place where he found the watch, must have contained some internal configuration or other; and that this configuration might be the structure now exhibited, *viz.* of the works of a watch, as well as a different structure.

V. Nor, fifthly, would it yield his inquiry more satisfaction to be answered, that there existed in things a principle of order, which had disposed the parts of the watch into their present form and situation. He never knew a watch made by the principle of order; nor can he even form to himself an idea of what is meant by a principle of order, distinct from the intelligence of the watch-maker.

VI. Sixthly, he would be surprised to hear that the mechanism of the watch was no proof of contrivance, only a motive to induce the mind to think so.

VII. And not less surprised to be informed, that the watch in his hand was nothing more than the result of the laws of *metallic* nature. It is a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient, operative cause of any thing. A law presupposes an agent; for it is only the mode,

according to which an agent proceeds: it implies a power; for it is the order, according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the *law* does nothing; is nothing. The expression, "the law of metallic nature," may sound strange and harsh to a philosophic ear; but it seems quite as justifiable as some others which are more familiar to him, such as "the law of vegetable nature," "the law of animal nature," or indeed as "the law of nature," in general, when assigned as the cause of phenomena, in exclusion of agency and power; or when it is substituted into the place of these.

VIII. Neither, lastly, would our observer be driven out of his conclusion, or from his confidence in its truth, by being told that he knows nothing at all about the matter. He knows enough for his argument: he knows the utility of the end; he knows the subserviency and adaptation of the means to the end. These points being known, his ignorance of other points, his doubts concerning other points, affect not the certainty of his reasoning. The consciousness of knowing little, need not beget a distrust of that which he does know.

CHAPTER II.

State of the Argument continued.

Suppose, in the next place, that the person who found the watch, should, after some time, discover that, in addition to all the properties which he had hitherto observed in it, it possessed the unexpected property of producing, in the course of its movement, another watch like itself (the thing is conceivable); that it contained within it a mechanism, a system of parts, a mould for instance, or a complex adjustment of lathes, files, and other tools, evidently and separately calculated for this purpose; let us inquire, what effect ought such a discovery to have upon his former conclusion.

I. The first effect would be to increase his admiration of the contrivance, and his conviction of the consummate skill of the contriver. Whether he regarded the object of the contrivance, the distinct apparatus, the intricate, yet in many parts intelligible mechanism, by which it was carried on, he would perceive, in this new observation, nothing but an additional reason for doing what he had already done,—for referring the construction of the watch to design, and to supreme art. If that construction *without* this property, or, which is the same thing, before this property had been noticed, proved intention and art to have been employed about it; still more strong would the proof appear, when he came to the knowledge of this farther property, the crown and perfection of all the rest.

II. He would reflect, that though the watch before him were, *in some sense*, the maker of the watch which was fabricated in the course of its movements, yet it was in a very different sense from that in which a carpenter, for instance, is the maker of a chair; the author of its contrivance, the cause of the relation of its parts to their use. With respect to these, the first watch was no cause at all to the second: in no such sense as this was it the author of the constitution and order, either of the parts which the new watch contained, or of the parts by the aid and instrumentality of which it was produced. We might possibly say, but with great latitude of expression, that a stream of water ground corn; but no latitude of expression would allow us to say, no stretch of conjecture could lead us to think, that the stream of water built the mill, though it were too ancient for us to know who the builder was. What the stream of water does in the affair, is neither more nor less than this; by the application of an unintelligent impulse to a mechanism previously arranged, arranged independently of it, and arranged by intelligence, an effect is produced, *viz.* the corn is ground. But the effect results from the arrangement. The force of the stream cannot be said to be the cause or author of the effect, still less of the arrangement. Understanding and plan in the formation of the mill were not the less necessary, for any share which the water has in grinding the corn; yet is this share the same as that which the watch would have contributed to the production of the new watch, upon the supposition assumed in the last section. Therefore,

III. Though it be now no longer probable, that the individual watch which our observer had found, was made immediately by the hand of an artificer, yet doth not this alteration in any wise affect the inference, that an artificer had been originally employed and concerned in the production. The argument from design remains as it was. Marks of design and contrivance are no more accounted for now than they were before. In the same thing, we may ask for the cause of different properties. We may ask for the cause of the colour of a body, of its hardness, of its heat; and these causes may be all different. We are now asking for the cause of that subserviency to a use, that relation to an end, which we have remarked in the watch before us. No answer is given to this question, by telling us that a preceding watch produced it. There cannot be design without a designer; contrivance, without a contriver; order, without choice; arrangement, without any thing capable of arranging; subserviency and relation to a purpose, without that which could intend a purpose; means suitable to an end, and executing their office in accomplishing that end, without the end ever having been contemplated, or the means accommodated to it. Arrangement, disposition of parts, subserviency of means to an end, relation of instruments to a use, imply the presence of intelligence and mind. No one, therefore, can rationally believe, that the insensible, inanimate watch, from which the watch before us issued, was the proper cause of the mechanism we so much admire in it;—could be truly said to have constructed the instrument, disposed its parts, assigned their office, determined their order, action, and mutual dependency, combined their several motions into one result, and that also a result connected with the utilities of other beings. All these properties, therefore, are as much unaccounted for as they were before.

IV. Nor is any thing gained by running the difficulty farther back, *i. e.* by supposing the watch before us to have been produced from another watch, that from a former, and so on indefinitely. Our going back, ever so far, brings us no nearer to the least degree of satisfaction upon the subject. Contrivance is still unaccounted for. We still want a contriver. A designing mind is neither

supplied by this supposition, nor dispensed with. If the difficulty were diminished the farther we went back, by going back indefinitely, we might exhaust it. And this is the only case to which this sort of reasoning applies. Where there is a tendency, or, as we increase the number of terms, a continual approach towards a limit, *there*, by supposing the number of terms to be what is called infinite, we may conceive the limit to be attained: but where there is no such tendency, or approach, nothing is effected by lengthening the series. There is no difference as to the point in question (whatever there may be as to many points,) between one series and another; between a series which is finite, and a series which is infinite. A chain composed of an infinite number of links, can no more support itself, than a chain composed of a finite number of links. And of this we are assured (though we never *can* have tried the experiment), because, by increasing the number of links, from ten for instance to a hundred, from a hundred to a thousand, &c. we make not the smallest approach, we observe not the smallest tendency towards self-support. There is no difference in this respect (yet there may be a great difference in several respects) between a chain of a greater or less length, between one chain and another, between one that is finite and one that is infinite. This very much resembles the case before us. The machine which we are inspecting demonstrates, by its construction, contrivance and design. Contrivance must have had a contriver; design a designer; whether the machine immediately proceeded from another machine or not. That circumstance alters not the case. That other machine may, in like manner, have proceeded from a former machine: nor does that alter the case; contrivance must have had a contriver. That former one from one preceding it: no alteration still; a contriver is still necessary. No tendency is perceived, no approach towards a diminution of this necessity. It is the same with any and every succession of these machines; a succession of ten, of a hundred, of a thousand; with one series, as with another; a series which is finite, as with a series which is infinite. In whatever other respects they may differ, in this they do not. In all equally, contrivance and design are unaccounted for.

The question is not simply, How came the first watch into existence? which question, it may be pretended, is done away by supposing the series of watches thus produced from one another to have been infinite, and consequently to have had no such *first*, for which it was necessary to provide a cause. This, perhaps, would have been nearly the state of the question, if nothing had been before us but an unorganized, unmechanized substance, without mark or indication of contrivance. It might be difficult to show that such substance could not have existed from eternity, either in succession (if it were possible, which I think it is not, for unorganized bodies to spring from one another,) or by individual perpetuity. But that is not the question now. To suppose it to be so, is to suppose that it made no difference whether he had found a watch or a stone. As it is, the metaphysics of that question have no place; for, in the watch which we are examining, are seen contrivance, design; an end, a purpose; means for the end, adaptation to the purpose. And the question which irresistibly presses upon our thoughts, is, whence this contrivance and design? The thing required is the intending mind, the adapting hand, the intelligence by which that hand was directed. This question, this demand, is not shaken off, by increasing a number or succession of substances, destitute of these properties; nor the more, by increasing that number to infinity. If it be said, that upon the supposition of one watch being produced from another in the course of that other's movements, and by means of the mechanism within it, we have a cause for the watch in my hand, *viz.* the watch from which it proceeded: I deny, that for the design, the contrivance, the suitableness of means to an end, the adaptation of instruments to a use (all which we discover in the watch,) we have any cause whatever. It is in vain, therefore, to assign a series of such causes, or to allege that a series may be carried back to infinity; for I do not admit that we have yet any cause at all of the phenomena, still less any series of causes, either finite or infinite. Here is contrivance, but no contriver; proofs of design, but no designer.

V. Our observer would farther also reflect, that the maker of the watch before him, was, in truth and reality, the maker of every watch produced from it; there being no difference except that the latter manifests a more exquisite skill between the making of another watch with his own hands, by the mediation of files, lathes, chisels, &c. and the disposing, fixing, and inserting, of these instruments, or of others equivalent to them, in the body of the watch already made, in such a manner as to form a new watch in the course of the movements which he had given to the old one. It is only working by one set of tools instead of another.

The conclusion which the *first* examination of the watch, of its works, construction, and movement, suggested, was, that it must have had, for the cause and author of that construction, an artificer, who understood its mechanism, and designed its use. This conclusion is invincible. A *second* examination presents us with a new discovery. The watch is found, in the course of its movement, to produce another watch, similar to itself; and not only so, but we perceive in it a system or organization, separately calculated for that purpose. What effect would this discovery have, or ought it to have, upon our former inference? What, as hath already been said, but to increase, beyond measure, our admiration of the skill which had been employed in the formation of such a machine? Or shall it, instead of this, all at once turn us round to an opposite conclusion, *viz.* that no art or skill whatever has been concerned in the business, although all other evidences of art and skill remain as they were, and this last and supreme piece of art be now added to the rest? Can this be maintained without absurdity? Yet this is atheism.

CHAPTER III.

Application of the Argument.

This is atheism: for every indication of contrivance, every manifestation of design, which existed in the watch, exists in the works of nature; with the difference, on the side of nature, of being greater and more, and that in a degree which ex-

ceeds all computation. I mean, that the contrivances of nature surpass the contrivances of art, in the complexity, subtilty, and curiosity, of the mechanism; and still more, if possible, do they go beyond them in number and variety; yet, in a multitude of cases, are not less evidently mechanical, not less evidently contrivances, not less evidently accommodated to their end, or suited to their office, than are the most perfect productions of human ingenuity.

I know no better method of introducing so large a subject, than that of comparing a single thing with a single thing; an eye, for example, with a telescope. As far as the examination of the instrument goes, there is precisely the same proof that the eye was made for vision, as there is that the telescope was made for assisting it. They are made upon the same principles; both being adjusted to the laws by which the transmission and refraction of rays of light are regulated. I speak not of the origin of the laws themselves; but such laws being fixed, the construction, in both cases, is adapted to them. For instance; these laws require, in order to produce the same effect, that the rays of light, in passing from water into the eye, should be refracted by a more convex surface, than when it passes out of air into the eye. Accordingly we find that the eye of a fish, in that part of it called the crystalline lens, is much rounder than the eye of terrestrial animals. What plainer manifestation of design can there be than this difference? What could a mathematical instrument-maker have done more, to show his knowledge of his principle, his application of that knowledge, his suiting of his means to his end; I will not say to display the compass or excellence of his skill and art, for in these all comparison is indecorous, but to testify counsel, choice, consideration, purpose?

To some it may appear a difference sufficient to destroy all similitude between the eye and the telescope, that the one is a perceiving organ, the other an unperceiving instrument. The fact is, that they are both instruments. And, as to the mechanism, at least as to mechanism being employed, and even as to the kind of it, this circumstance varies not the analogy at all. For, observe what the constitution of the eye is. It is necessary, in order to produce distinct vision, that an image or picture of the object be formed at the bottom of the eye. Whence this necessity arises, or how the picture is connected with the sensation, or contributes to it, it may be difficult, nay, we will confess, if you please, impossible for us to search out. But the present question is not concerned in the inquiry. It may be true, that, in this, and in other instances, we trace mechanical contrivance a certain way: and that then we come to something which is not mechanical, or which is inscrutable. But this affects not the certainty of our investigation, as far as we have gone. The difference between an animal and an automatic statue, consists in this, that, in the animal, we trace the mechanism to a certain point, and then we are stopped; either the mechanism becoming too subtile for our discernment, or something else beside the known laws of mechanism taking place; whereas, in the automaton, for the comparatively few motions of which it is capable, we trace the mechanism throughout. But up to the limit, the reasoning is as clear and certain in the one case as in the other. In the example before us, it is a matter of certainty, because it is a matter which experience and observation demonstrate, that the formation of an image at the bottom of the eye is necessary to perfect vision. The image itself can be shown. Whatever affects the distinctness of the image, affects the distinctness of the vision. The formation then of such an image being necessary (no matter how) to the sense of sight, and to the exercise of that sense, the apparatus by which it is formed is constructed and put together, not only with infinitely more art, but upon the self-same principles of art, as in the telescope or the camera obscura. The perception arising from the image may be laid out of the question; for the production of the image, these are instruments of the same kind. The end is the same; the means are the same. The purpose in both is alike; the contrivance for accomplishing that purpose is in both alike. The lenses of the telescope, and the humours of the eye, bear a complete resemblance to one another, in their figure, their position, and in their power over the rays of light, *viz.* in bringing each pencil to a point at the right distance from the lens; namely, in the eye, at the exact place where the membrane is spread to receive it. How is it possible, under circumstances of such close affinity, and under the operation of equal evidence, to exclude contrivance from the one, yet to acknowledge the proof of contrivance having been employed, as the plainest and clearest of all propositions, in the other?

The resemblance between the two cases is still more accurate, and obtains in more points than we have yet represented, or than we are, on the first view of the subject, aware of. In dioptric telescopes, there is an imperfection of this nature. Pencils of light, in passing through glass lenses, are separated into different colours, thereby tinging the object, especially the edges of it, as if it were viewed through a prism. To correct this inconvenience had been long a desideratum in the art. At last it came into the mind of a sagacious optician, to inquire how this matter was managed in the eye; in which there was exactly the same difficulty to contend with as in the telescope. His observation taught him, that, in the eye, the evil was cured by combining lenses composed of different substances, *i. e.* of substances which possessed different refracting powers. Our artist borrowed thence his hint; and produced a correction of the defect, by imitating, in glasses made from different materials, the effects of the different humours through which the rays of light pass before they reach the bottom of the eye. Could this be in the eye without purpose, which suggested to the optician the only effectual means of attaining that purpose?

But farther; there are other points, not so much perhaps of strict resemblance between the two, as of superiority of the eye over the telescope; yet of a superiority which, being founded in the laws that regulate both, may furnish topics of fair and just comparison. Two things were wanted to the eye, which were not wanted (at least in the same degree) to the telescope; and these were, the adaptation of the organ, first, to different degrees of light; and, secondly, to the vast diversity of distance at which objects are viewed by the naked eye, *viz.* from a few inches to as many miles. These difficulties present not themselves to the maker of the telescope. He wants all the light he can get; and he never directs his instrument to

objects near at hand. In the eye, both these cases were to be provided for; and for the purpose of providing for them, a subtile and appropriate mechanism is introduced:

I. In order to exclude excess of light, when it is excessive, and to render objects visible under obscurer degrees of it, when no more can be had, the hole or aperture in the eye, through which the light enters, is so formed, as to contract or dilate itself for the purpose of admitting a greater or less number of rays at the same time. The chamber of the eye is a camera obscura, which, when the light is too small, can enlarge its opening; when too strong, can again contract it; and that without any other assistance than that of its own exquisite machinery. It is farther also, in the human subject, to be observed, that this hole in the eye which we call the pupil, under all its different dimensions, retains its exact circular shape. This is a structure extremely artificial. Let an artist only try to execute the same; he will find that his threads and strings must be disposed with great consideration and contrivance, to make a circle, which shall continually change its diameter, yet preserve its form. This is done in the eye by an application of fibres, *i. e.* of strings, similar, in their position and action, to what an artist would and must employ, if he had the same piece of workmanship to perform.

II. The second difficulty which has been stated, was the suiting of the same organ to the perception of objects that lie near at hand, within a few inches, we will suppose, of the eye, and of objects which are placed at a considerable distance from it, that, for example, of as many furlongs (I speak in both cases of the distance at which distinct vision can be exercised.) Now this, according to the principles of optics, that is, according to the laws by which the transmission of light is regulated (and these laws are fixed,) could not be done without the organ itself undergoing an alteration, and receiving an adjustment, that might correspond with the exigency of the case, that is to say, with the different inclination to one another under which the rays of light reached it. Rays issuing from points placed at a small distance from the eye, and which consequently must enter the eye in a spreading or diverging order, cannot, by the optical instrument in the same state, be brought to a point, *i. e.* be made to form an image, in the same place with rays proceeding from objects situated at a much greater distance, and which rays arrive at the eye in directions nearly (and physically speaking) parallel. It requires a rounder lens to do it. The point of concourse behind the lens must fall critically upon the retina, or the vision is confused; yet, other things remaining the same, this point, by the immutable properties of light, is carried farther back when the rays proceed from a near object, than when they are sent from one that is remote. A person who was using an optical instrument, would manage this matter by changing, as the occasion required, his lens or his telescope; or by adjusting the distance of his glasses with his hand or his screw: but how is it to be managed in the eye? What the alteration was, or in what part of the eye it took place, or by what means it was effected (for if the known laws which govern the refraction of light be maintained, some alteration in the state of the organ there must be,) had long formed a subject of inquiry and conjecture. The change, though sufficient for the purpose, is so minute as to elude ordinary observation. Some very late discoveries, deduced from a laborious and most accurate inspection of the structure and operation of the organ, seem at length to have ascertained the mechanical alteration which the parts of the eye undergo. It is found, that by the action of certain muscles, called the straight muscles, and which action is the most advantageous that could be imagined for the purpose, —it is found, I say, that whenever the eye is directed to a near object, three changes are produced in it at the same time, all severally contributing to the adjustment required. The cornea, or outermost coat of the eye, is rendered more round and prominent; the crystalline lens underneath is pushed forward; and the axis of vision, as the depth of the eye is called, is elongated. These changes in the eye vary its power over the rays of light in such a manner and degree as to produce exactly the effect which is wanted, *viz.* the formation of an image *upon the retina*, whether the rays come to the eye in a state of divergency, which is the case when the object is near to the eye, or come parallel to one another, which is the case when the object is placed at a distance. Can any thing be more decisive of contrivance than this is? The most secret laws of optics must have been known to the author of a structure endowed with such a capacity of change. It is as though an optician, when he had a nearer object to view, should *rectify* his instrument by putting in another glass, at the same time drawing out also his tube to a different length.

Observe a new-born child first lifting up its eyelids. What does the opening of the curtain discover? The anterior part of two pellucid globes, which, when they come to be examined, are found to be constructed upon strict optical principles; the self-same principles upon which we ourselves construct optical instruments. We find them perfect for the purpose of forming an image by refraction; composed of parts executing different offices: one part having fulfilled its office upon the pencil of light, delivering it over to the action of another part; that to a third, and so onward; the progressive action depending for its success upon the nicest and minutest adjustment of the parts concerned; yet these parts so in fact adjusted, as to produce, not by a simple action or effect, but by a combination of actions and effects, the result which is ultimately wanted. And forasmuch as this organ would have to operate under different circumstances, with strong degrees of light, and with weak degrees, upon near objects, and upon remote ones; and these differences demanded, according to the laws by which the transmission of light is regulated, a corresponding diversity of structure; that the aperture, for example, through which the light passes, should be larger or less; the lenses rounder or flatter, or that their distance from the tablet, upon which the picture is delineated, should be shortened or lengthened: this, I say, being the case, and the difficulty to which the eye was to be adapted, we find its several parts capable of being occasionally changed, and a most artificial apparatus provided to produce that change. This is far beyond the common regulator of a watch, which requires the touch of a foreign hand to set it; but it is not altogether unlike Harrison's contrivance for making a watch regulate itself, by inserting within it a machinery, which, by the artful use of the different expansion of metals, preserves

the equability of the motion under all the various temperatures of heat and cold in which the instrument may happen to be placed. The ingenuity of this last contrivance has been justly praised. Shall, therefore, a structure which differs from it, chiefly by surpassing it, be accounted no contrivance at all? or, if it be a contrivance, that it is without a contriver!

But this, though much, is not the whole: by different species of animals the faculty we are describing is possessed, in degrees suited to the different range of vision which their mode of life, and of procuring their food, requires. *Birds*, for instance, in general, procure their food by means of their beak; and, the distance between the eye and the point of the beak being small, it becomes necessary that they should have the power of seeing very near objects distinctly. On the other hand, from being often elevated much above the ground, living in air, and moving through it with great velocity, they require, for their safety, as well as for assisting them in descrying their prey, a power of seeing at a great distance; a power of which, in birds of rapine, surprising examples are given. The fact accordingly is, that two peculiarities are found in the eyes of birds, both tending to *facilitate* the change upon which the adjustment of the eye to different distances depends. The one is a bony, yet, in most species, a flexible rim or hoop, surrounding the broadest part of the eye; which, confining the action of the muscles to that part, increases the effect of their lateral pressure upon the orb, by which pressure its axis is elongated for the purpose of looking at very near objects. The other is an additional muscle, called the marsupium, to draw, on occasion, the crystalline lens *back*, and to fit the same eye for the viewing of very distant objects. By these means, the eyes of birds can pass from one extreme to another of their scale of adjustment, with more ease and readiness than the eyes of other animals.

The eyes of *fishes* also, compared with those of terrestrial animals, exhibit certain distinctions of structure, adapted to their state and element. We have already observed upon the figure of the crystalline compensating by its roundness the density of the medium through which their light passes. To which we have to add, that the eyes of fish, in their natural and indolent state, appear to be adjusted to near objects, in this respect differing from the human eye, as well as those of quadrupeds and birds. The ordinary shape of the fish's eye being in a much higher degree convex than that of land animals, a corresponding difference attends its muscular conformation, *viz.* that it is throughout calculated for *flattening* the eye.

The *iris* also in the eyes of fish does not admit of contraction. This is a great difference, of which the probable reason is, that the diminished light in water is never too strong for the retina.

In the *eel*, which has to work its head through sand and gravel, the roughest and harshest substances, there is placed before the eye, and at some distance from it, a transparent, horny, convex case or covering, which, without obstructing the sight, defends the organ. To such an animal, could any thing be more wanted, or more useful?

Thus, in comparing the eyes of different kinds of animals, we see, in their resemblances and distinctions, one general plan laid down, and that plan varied with the varying exigencies to which it is to be applied.

There is one property, however, common, I believe, to all eyes, at least to all which have been examined,* namely, that the optic nerve enters the bottom of the eye, not in the centre or middle, but a little on one side; not in the point where the axis of the eye meets the retina, but between that point and the nose. The difference which this makes is, that no part of an object is unperceived by both eyes at the same time.

In considering vision as achieved by the means of an image formed at the bottom of the eye, we can never reflect without wonder upon the smallness, yet correctness of the picture, the subtilty of the touch, the fineness of the lines. A landscape of five or six square leagues is brought into a space of half an inch diameter; yet the multitude of objects which it contains, are all preserved; are all discriminated in their magnitudes, positions, figures, colours. The prospect from Hampstead-hill is compressed into the compass of a sixpence, yet circumstantially represented. A stage coach, travelling at its ordinary speed for half an hour, passes, in the eye, only over one twelfth of an inch, yet is this change of place in the image distinctly perceived throughout its whole progress; for it is only by means of that perception that the motion of the coach itself is made sensible to the eye. If any thing can abate our admiration of the smallness of this visual tablet compared with the extent of vision, it is a reflection which the view of nature leads us, every hour to make, *viz.* that, in the hands of the Creator, great and little are nothing.

Sturmius held, that the examination of the eye was a cure for atheism. Besides that conformity to optical principles which its internal constitution displays, and which alone amounts to a manifestation of intelligence having been exerted in the structure; besides this, which forms, no doubt, the leading character of the organ, there is to be seen, in every thing belonging to it and about it, an extraordinary degree of care, an anxiety for its preservation, due, if we may so speak, to its value and its tenderness. It is lodged in a strong, deep, bony socket, composed by the junction of seven different bones,† hollowed at their edges. In some few species, as that of the coatimondi,‡ the orbit is not bony throughout; but whenever this is the case, the upper, which is the deficient part, is supplied by a cartilaginous ligament; a substitution which shows the same care. Within this socket it is imbedded in fat, of all animal substances the best adapted both to its repose and motion. It is sheltered by the eye-brows; an arch of hair, which, like a thatched penthouse, prevents the sweat and moisture of the forehead from running down into it.

But it is still better protected by its *lid*. Of the superficial parts of the animal frame, I know none which, in its office and structure, is more deserving of attention than the eyelid. It defends the eye; it wipes it; it closes it in sleep. Are there, in any work of art whatever, purposes more evident than those which this organ fulfils? or an apparatus for executing those purposes more intelligible, more appropriate, or more mechanical?

* The eye of the seal or sea-calf, I understand, is an exception: Mem. Acad. Paris, 1701, p. 123.

† Heister, sect. 89. ‡ Mem. R. Ac. Paris, p. 117.

If it be overlooked by the observer of nature, it can only be because it is obvious and familiar. This is a tendency to be guarded against. We pass by the plainest instances, whilst we are exploring those which are rare and curious: by which conduct of the understanding we sometimes neglect the strongest observations, being taken up with others, which, though more recondite and scientific, are, as solid arguments, entitled to much less consideration.

In order to keep the eye moist and clean, (which qualities are necessary to its brightness and its use,) a wash is constantly supplied by a secretion for the purpose; and the superfluous brine is conveyed to the nose through a perforation in the bone as large as a goose-quill. When once the fluid has entered the nose, it spreads itself upon the inside of the nostril, and is evaporated by the current of warm air, which in the course of respiration is continually passing over it. Can any pipe or outlet, for carrying off the waste liquor from a dye-house or a distillery, be more mechanical than this is? It is easily perceived, that the eye must want moisture: but could the want of the eye generate the gland which produces the tear, or bore the hole by which it is discharged,—a hole through a bone?

It is observable that this provision is not found in fish,—the element in which they live supplying a constant lotion to the eye.

It were, however, injustice to dismiss the eye as a piece of mechanism, without noticing that most exquisite of all contrivances, the *nictitating membrane*, which is found in the eyes of birds and of many quadrupeds. Its use is to sweep the eye, which it does in an instant, to spread over it the lachrymal humour; to defend it also from sudden injuries; yet not totally, when drawn upon the pupil, to shut out the light. The commodiousness with which it lies folded up in the upper corner of the eye, ready for use and action, and the quickness with which it executes its purpose, are properties known and obvious to every observer: but what is equally admirable, though not quite so obvious, is the combination of two kinds of substance, muscular and elastic, and of two different kinds of action, by which the motion of this membrane is performed. It is not, as in ordinary cases, by the action of two antagonist muscles, one pulling forward and the other backward, that a reciprocal change is effected; but it is thus: The membrane itself is an elastic substance, capable of being drawn out by force like a piece of elastic gum, and by its own elasticity returning, when the force is removed, to its former position. Such being its nature, in order to fit it up for its office, it is connected by a tendon or thread with a muscle in the back part of the eye: this tendon or thread, though strong, is so fine as not to obstruct the sight, even when it passes across it; and the muscle itself, being placed in the *back* part of the eye, derives from its situation the advantage, not only of being secure, but of being out of the way; which it would hardly have been in any position that could be assigned to it in the anterior part of the orb, where its function lies. When the muscle behind the eye contracts, the membrane, by means of the communicating thread, is instantly drawn over the fore-part of it. When the muscular contraction (which is a positive, and, most probably, a voluntary effort) ceases to be exerted, the elasticity alone of the membrane brings it back again to its position.* Does not this, if any thing can do it, bespeak an artist, master of his work, acquainted with his materials? "Of a thousand other things," say the French academicians, "we perceive not the contrivance, because we understand them only by the effects, of which we know not the causes: but we here treat of a machine, all the parts whereof are visible: and which need only be looked upon, to discover the reasons of its motion and action."†

In the configuration of the muscle which, though placed behind the eye, draws the nictitating membrane over the eye, there is, what the authors, just now quoted, deservedly call a marvellous mechanism. I suppose this structure to be found in other animals; but, in the memoirs from which this account is taken, it is anatomically demonstrated only in the cassowary. The muscle is *passed through a loop formed by another muscle;* and is there inflected, as if it were round a pulley. This is a peculiarity; and observe the advantage of it. A single muscle with a straight tendon, which is the common muscular form, would have been sufficient, if it had had power to draw far enough. But the contraction, necessary to draw the membrane over the whole eye, required a longer muscle than could lie straight at the bottom of the eye. Therefore, in order to have a greater length in a less compass, the cord of the main muscle makes an angle. This, so far, answers the end; but, still farther, it makes an angle, not round a fixed pivot, but round a loop formed by another muscle; which second muscle, whenever it contracts, of course twitches the first muscle at the point of inflection, and thereby assists the action designed by both.

One question may possibly have dwelt in the reader's mind during the perusal of these observations, namely, Why should not the Deity have given to the animal the faculty of vision *at once?* Why this circuitous perception; the ministry of so many means; an element provided for the purpose; reflected from opaque substances, refracted through transparent ones; and both according to precise laws; then a complex organ, an intricate and artificial apparatus, in order, by the operation of this element, and in conformity with the restrictions of these laws, to produce an image upon a membrane communicating with the brain? Wherefore all this? Why make the difficulty in order to surmount it? If to perceive objects by some other mode than that of touch, or objects which lay out of the reach of that sense, were the thing proposed; could not a simple volition of the Creator have communicated the capacity? Why resort to contrivance, where power is omnipotent? Contrivance, by its very definition and nature, is the refuge of imperfection. To have recourse to expedients, implies difficulty, impediments, restraint, defect of power. This question belongs to the other senses, as well as to sight; to the general functions of animal life, as nutrition, secretion, respiration; to the economy of vegetables; and indeed to almost all the operations of nature. The question, therefore, is of very wide extent;

* Phil. Trans. 1796.

† Memoirs for a Natural History of Animals, by the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, done into English by order of the Royal Society, 1701, page 249.

and amongst other answers which may be given to it, besides reasons of which probably we are ignorant, one answer is this: It is only by the display of contrivance, that the existence, the agency, the wisdom, of the Deity, *could* be testified to his rational creatures. This is the scale by which we ascend to all the knowledge of our Creator which we possess, so far as it depends upon the phenomena, or the works of nature. Take away this, and you take away from us every subject of observation, and ground of reasoning; I mean as our rational faculties are formed at present. Whatever is done, God could have done without the intervention of instruments or means; but it is in the construction of instruments, in the choice and adaptation of means, that a creative intelligence is seen. It is this which constitutes the order and beauty of the universe. God, therefore, has been pleased to prescribe limits to his own power, and to work his ends within those limits. The general laws of matter have perhaps the nature of these limits; its inertia, its re-action; the laws which govern the communication of motion, the refraction and reflection of light, the constitution of fluids non-elastic and elastic, the transmission of sound through the latter; the laws of magnetism, of electricity; and probably others, yet undiscovered. These are general laws; and when a particular purpose is to be effected, it is not by making a new law, nor by the suspension of the old ones, nor by making them wind, and bend, and yield to the occasion (for nature with great steadiness adheres to and supports them;) but it is, as we have seen in the eye, by the interposition of an apparatus, corresponding with these laws, and suited to the exigency which results from them, that the purpose is at length attained. As we have said, therefore, God prescribes limits to his power that he may let in the exercise, and thereby exhibit demonstrations of his wisdom. For then, *i. e.* such laws and limitations being laid down, it is as though one Being should have fixed certain rules; and, if we may so speak, provided certain materials; and, afterward, have committed to another Being, out of these materials, and in subordination to these rules, the task of drawing forth a creation: a supposition which evidently leaves room, and induces indeed a necessity, for contrivance. Nay, there may be many such agents, and many ranks of these. We do not advance this as a doctrine either of philosophy or of religion; but we say that the subject may safely be represented under this view, because the Deity, acting himself by general laws, will have the same consequences upon our reasoning, as if he had prescribed these laws to another. It has been said, that the problem of creation was, "attraction and matter being given, to make a world out of them;" and, as above explained, this statement perhaps does not convey a false idea.

We have made choice of the eye as an instance upon which to rest the argument of this chapter. Some single example was to be proposed; and the eye offered itself under the advantage of admitting of a strict comparison with optical instruments. The ear, it is probable, is no less artificially and mechanically adapted to its office, than the eye. But we know less about it: we do not so well understand the action, the use, or the mutual dependency, of its internal parts. Its general form, however, both external and internal, is sufficient to show that it is an instrument adapted to the reception of *sound*; that is to say, already knowing that sound consists in pulses of the air, we perceive, in the structure of the ear, a suitableness to receive impressions from this species of action, and to propagate these impressions to the brain. For of what does this structure consist? An external ear (the concha,) calculated, like an ear-trumpet, to catch and collect the pulses of which we have spoken; in large quadrupeds, turning to the sound, and possessing a configuration, as well as motion, evidently fitted for the office: of a tube which leads into the head, lying at the root of this outward ear, the folds and sinuses thereof tending and conducting the air towards it: of a thin membrane, like the pelt of a drum, stretched across this passage upon a bony rim: of a chain of moveable, and infinitely curious, bones, forming a communication, and the only communication that can be observed, between the membrane last mentioned and the interior channels and recesses of the skull: of cavities, similar in shape and form to wind instruments of music, being spiral or portions of circles: of the eustachian tube, like the hole in a drum, to let the air pass freely into and out of the barrel of the ear, as the covering membrane vibrates, or as the temperature may be altered: the whole labyrinth hewn out of a rock; that is wrought into the substance of the hardest bone of the body. This assemblage of connected parts constitutes together an apparatus, plainly enough relative to the transmission of sound, or of the impulses received from sound, and only to be lamented in not being better understood.

The communication within, formed by the small bones of the ear, is, to look upon, more like what we are accustomed to call machinery, than any thing I am acquainted with in animal bodies. It seems evidently designed to continue towards the sensorium the tremulous motions which are excited in the membrane of the tympanum, or what is better known by the name of the "drum of the ear." The compages of bones consists of four, which are so disposed, and so hinge upon one another, as that if the membrane, the drum of the ear, vibrate, all the four are put in motion together; and, by the result of their action, work the base of that which is the last in the series, upon an aperture which it closes, and upon which it plays, and which aperture opens into the tortuous canals that lead to the brain. This last bone of the four is called the *stapes*. The office of the drum of the ear is to spread out an extended surface, capable of receiving the impressions of sound, and of being put by them into a state of vibration. The office of the stapes is to repeat these vibrations. It is a repeating frigate, stationed more within the line. From which account of its action may be understood, how the sensation of sound will be excited by any thing which communicates a vibratory motion to the stapes, though not, as in all ordinary cases, through the intervention of the membrana tympani. This is done by solid bodies applied to the bones of the skull, as by a metal bar holden at one end between the teeth, and touching at the other end a tremulous body. It likewise appears to be done, in a considerable degree, by the air itself, even when this membrane, the drum of the ear, is greatly damaged. Either in the natural or preternatural state of the organ, the use of the chain of bones is to propagate the impulse in a

direction towards the brain, and to propagate it with the advantage of a lever; which advantage consists in increasing the force and strength of the vibration, and at the same time diminishing the space through which it oscillates; both of which changes may augment or facilitate the still deeper action of the auditory nerves.

The benefit of the eustachian tube to the organ, may be made out upon known pneumatic principles. Behind the drum of the ear is a second cavity, or barrel, called the tympanum. The eustachian tube is a slender pipe, but sufficient for the passage of air, leading from this cavity into the back part of the mouth. Now, it would not have done to have had a vacuum in this cavity; for, in that case, the pressure of the atmosphere from without would have burst the membrane which covered it. Nor would it have done to have filled the cavity with lymph or any other secretion; which would necessarily have obstructed both the vibration of the membrane and the play of the small bones. Nor, lastly, would it have done to have occupied the space with confined air, because the expansion of that air by heat, or its contraction by cold, would have distended or relaxed the covering membrane, in a degree inconsistent with the purpose which it was assigned to execute. The only remaining expedient, and that for which the eustachian tube serves, is to open to this cavity a communication with the external air. In one word; it exactly answers the purpose of the hole in a drum.

The membrana tympani itself, likewise, deserves all the examination which can be made of it. It is not found in the ears of fish; which furnishes an additional proof of what indeed is indicated by every thing about it, that it is appropriated to the action of air, or of an elastic medium. It bears an obvious resemblance to the pelt or head of a drum, from which it takes its name. It resembles also a drum-head in this principal property, that its use depends upon its tension. *Tension* is the state essential to it. Now we know that, in a drum, the pelt is carried over a hoop, and braced as occasion requires, by the means of strings attached to its circumference. In the membrane of the ear, the same purpose is provided for, more simply, but not less mechanically, nor less successfully, by a different expedient, *viz.* by the end of a bone (the handle of the malleus) pressing upon its centre. It is only in very large animals that the texture of this membrane can be discerned. In the Philosophical Transactions for the year 1800, (vol. i.) Mr. Everard Home has given some curious observations upon the ear, and the drum of the ear of an *elephant*. He discovered in it, what he calls a radiated muscle, that is, straight muscular fibres, passing along the membrane from the circumference to the centre; from the bony rim which surrounds it towards the handle of the malleus to which the central part is attached. This muscle he supposes to be designed to bring the membrane into unison with different sounds: but then he also discovered, that this muscle itself cannot act unless the membrane be drawn to a stretch, and kept in a due state of tightness, by what may be called a foreign force, *viz.* the action of the muscles of the malleus. Supposing his explanation of the use of the parts to be just, our author is well founded in the reflection which he makes upon it, "that this mode of adapting the ear to different sounds, is ono of the most beautiful applications of muscles in the body: *the mechanism is so simple, and the variety of effects so great.*"

In another volume of the Transactions above referred to, and of the same year, two most curious cases are related, of persons who retained the sense of hearing, not in a perfect, but in a very considerable degree, notwithstanding the almost total loss of the membrane we have been describing. In one of these cases, the use here assigned to that membrane, of modifying the impressions of sound by change of tension, was attempted to be supplied by straining the muscles of the outward ear. "The external ear," we are told, "had acquired a distinct motion upward and backward, which was observable whenever the patient listened to any thing which he did not distinctly hear; when he was addressed in a whisper, the ear was seen immediately to move; when the tone of voice was louder, it then remained altogether motionless."

It appears probable, from both these cases, that a collateral, if not principal, use of the membrane, is to cover and protect the barrel of the ear which lies behind it. Both the patients suffered from cold: one, "a great increase of deafness from catching cold;" the other, "very considerable pain from exposure to a stream of cold air." Bad effects therefore followed from this cavity being left open to the external air; yet, had the Author of nature shut it up by any other cover, than what was capable, by its texture, of receiving vibrations from sound, and, by its connexion with the interior parts, of transmitting those vibrations to the brain, the use of the organ, so far as we can judge, must have been entirely obstructed.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Succession of Plants and Animals.

THE *generation* of the animal no more accounts for the contrivance of the eye or ear, than, upon the supposition stated in a preceding chapter, the production of a watch by the motion and mechanism of a former watch, would account for the skill and intention evidenced in the watch, so produced; than it would account for the disposition of the wheels, the catching of their teeth, the relation of the several parts of the works to one another, and to their common end; for the suitableness of their forms and places to their offices, for their connexion, their operation, and the useful result of that operation. I do insist most strenuously upon the correctness of this comparison; that it holds as to every mode of specific propagation; and that whatever was true of the watch, under the hypothesis above-mentioned, is true of plants and animals.

1. To begin with the fructification of plants. Can it be doubted but that the seed contains a particular organization? Whether a latent plantule with the means of temporary nutrition, or whatever else it be, it encloses an organization suited to the germination of a new plant. Has the plant which produced the seed any thing more to do with that organization, than the watch would have had to do with the structure of the watch which was produced in the course of its mechanical movement? I mean, has it any thing at all to do with the *contrivance?* The maker and

contriver of one watch, when he inserted within it a mechanism suited to the production of another watch, was, in truth, the maker and contriver of that other watch. All the properties of the new watch were to be referred to his agency: the design manifested in it, to his intention: the art, to him as the artist: the collocation of each part to his placing: the action, effect, and use, to his counsel, intelligence, and workmanship. In producing it by the intervention of a former watch, he was only working by one set of tools instead of another. So it is with the plant, and the seed produced by it. Can any distinction be assigned between the two cases; between the producing watch and the producing plant; both passive, unconscious substances; both, by the organization which was given to them, producing their like, without understanding or design; both, that is, instruments?

II. From plants we may proceed to oviparous animals; from seeds to eggs. Now I say, that the bird has the same concern in the formation of the egg which she lays, as the plant has in that of the seed which it drops; and no other, nor greater. The internal constitution of the egg is as much a secret to the hen, as if the hen were inanimate. Her will cannot alter it, or change a single feather of the chick. She can neither foresee nor determine of which sex her brood shall be, or how many of either; yet the thing produced shall be, from the first, very different in its make, according to the sex which it bears. So far, therefore, from adapting the means, she is not beforehand apprised of the effect. If there be concealed within that smooth shell a provision and a preparation for the production and nourishment of a new animal, they are not of her providing or preparing: if there be contrivance, it is none of hers. Although, therefore, there be the difference of life and perceptivity between the animal and the plant, it is a difference which enters not into the account; it is a foreign circumstance: it is a difference of properties not employed. The animal function and the vegetable function are alike destitute of any design which can operate upon the form of the thing produced. The plant has no design in producing the seed, no comprehension of the nature or use of what it produces; the bird, with respect to its egg, is not above the plant with respect to its seed. Neither the one nor the other bears that sort of relation to what proceeds from them, which a joiner does to the chair which he makes. Now a cause, which bears *this* relation to the effect, is what we want, in order to account for the suitableness of means to an end, the fitness and fitting of one thing to another; and this cause the parent plant or animal does not supply.

It is farther observable concerning the propagation of plants and animals, that the apparatus employed exhibits no resemblance to the thing produced; in this respect holding an analogy with instruments and tools of art. The filaments, antheræ, and stigmata of flowers bear no more resemblance to the young plant, or even to the seed, which is formed by their intervention, than a chisel or a plane does to a table or chair. What then are the filaments, antheræ, and stigmata of plants, but instruments strictly so called?

III. We may advance from animals which bring forth eggs, to animals which bring forth their young alive; and of this latter class, from the lowest to the highest; from irrational to rational life, from brutes to the human species; without perceiving, as we proceed, any alteration whatever in the terms of the comparison. The rational animal does not produce its offspring with more certainty or success than the irrational animal; a man than a quadruped, a quadruped than a bird; nor (for we may follow the gradation through its whole scale) a bird than a plant; nor a plant than a watch, a piece of dead mechanism, would do, upon the supposition which has already so often been repeated. Rationality, therefore, has nothing to do in the business. If an account must be given of the contrivance which we observe; if it be demanded, whence arose either the contrivance by which the young animal is produced, or the contrivance manifested in the young animal itself, it is not from the reason of the parent that any such account can be drawn. He is the cause of his offspring in the same sense as that in which a gardener is the cause of the tulip which grows upon his parterre, and in no other. We admire the flower; we examine the plant; we perceive the conduciveness of many of its parts to their end and office; we observe a provision for its nourishment, growth, protection, and fecundity; but we never think of the gardener in all this. We attribute nothing of this to his agency; yet it may still be true, that without the gardener, we should not have had the tulip: just so it is with the succession of animals even of the highest order. For the contrivance discovered in the structure of the thing produced, we want a contriver. The parent is not the contriver. His consciousness decides that question. He is in total ignorance why that which is produced took its present form rather than any other. It is for him only to be astonished by the effect. We can no more look, therefore, to the intelligence of the parent animal for what we are in search of, a cause of relation, and of subserviency of parts to their use, which relation and subserviency we see in the procreated body, than we can refer the internal conformation of an acorn to the intelligence of the oak from which it dropped, or the structure of the watch to the intelligence of the watch which produced it; there being no difference, as far as argument is concerned, between an intelligence which is not exerted, and an intelligence which does not exist.

CHAPTER V.

Application of the Argument continued.

EVERY observation which was made in our first chapter, concerning the watch, may be repeated with strict propriety concerning the eye; concerning animals; concerning plants; concerning, indeed, all the organized parts of the works of nature. As,

I. When we are inquiring simply after the *existence* of an intelligent Creator, imperfection, inaccuracy, liability to disorder, occasional irregularities, may subsist in a considerable degree, without inducing any doubt into the question: just as a watch may frequently go wrong, seldom perhaps exactly right, may be faulty in some parts, defective in some, without the smallest ground of suspicion from thence arising that it was not a watch; not made; or not made for the purpose ascribed to it. When faults are pointed

out, and when a question is started concerning the skill of the artist, or dexterity with which the work is executed, then, indeed, in order to defend these qualities from accusation, we must be able, either to expose some intractableness and imperfection in the materials, or point out some invincible difficulty in the execution, into which imperfection and difficulty the matter of complaint may be resolved; or if we cannot do this, we must adduce such specimens of consummate art and contrivance, proceeding from the same hand, as may convince the inquirer of the existence, in the case before him, of impediments like those which we have mentioned, although, what from the nature of the case is very likely to happen, they be unknown and unperceived by him. This we must do in order to vindicate the artist's skill, or, at least, the perfection of it: as we must also judge of his intention, and of the provisions employed in fulfilling that intention, not from an instance in which they fail, but from the great plurality of instances in which they succeed. But, after all, these are different questions from the question of the artist's existence; or, which is the same, whether the thing before us be a work of art or not: and the questions ought always to be kept separate in the mind. So likewise it is in the works of nature. Irregularities and imperfections are of little or no weight in the consideration, when that consideration relates simply to the existence of a Creator. When the argument respects his attributes, they are of weight; but are then to be taken in conjunction (the attention is not to rest upon them, but they are to be taken in conjunction) with the unexceptionable evidences which we possess, of skill, power, and benevolence, displayed in other instances: which evidences may, in strength, number, and variety, be such, and may so overpower apparent blemishes, as to induce us, upon the most reasonable ground, to believe, that these last ought to be referred to some cause, though we be ignorant of it, other than defect of knowledge or of benevolence in the author.

II. There may be also parts of plants and animals; as there were supposed to be of the watch, of which, in some instances, the operation, in others, the use, is unknown. These form different cases: for the operation may be unknown, yet the use be certain. Thus it is with the lungs of animals. It does not, I think, appear, that we are acquainted with the action of the air upon the blood, or in what manner that action is communicated by the lungs; yet we find that a very short suspension of their office destroys the life of the animal. In this case, therefore, we may be said to know the use, nay we experience the necessity, of the organ, though we be ignorant of its operation. Nearly the same thing may be observed of what is called the lymphatic system. We suffer grievous inconveniences from its disorder, without being informed of the office which it sustains in the economy of our bodies. There may possibly also be some few examples of the second class, in which not only the operation is unknown, but in which experiments may seem to prove that the part is not necessary; or may leave a doubt, how far it is even useful to the plant or animal in which it is found. This is said to be the case with the spleen; which has been extracted from dogs, without any sensible injury to their vital functions. Instances of the former kind, namely, in which we cannot explain the operation, may be numerous; for they will be so in proportion to our ignorance. They will be more or fewer to different persons, and in different stages of science. Every improvement of knowledge diminishes their number. There is hardly, perhaps, a year passes, that does not, in the works of nature, bring some operation, or some mode of operation, to light, which was before undiscovered,—probably unsuspected. Instances of the second kind, namely, where the part appears to be totally useless, I believe to be extremely rare; compared with the number of those, of which the use is evident, they are beneath any assignable proportion; and, perhaps, have never been submitted to a trial and examination sufficiently accurate, long enough continued, or often enough repeated. No accounts which I have seen are satisfactory. The mutilated animal may live and grow fat, (as was the case of the dog deprived of its spleen,) yet may be defective in some other of its functions; which, whether they can all, or in what degree of vigour and perfection, be performed, or how long preserved, without the extirpated organ, does not seem to be ascertained by experiment. But to this case, even were it fully made out, may be applied the consideration which we suggested concerning the watch, *viz.* that these superfluous parts do not negative the reasoning which we instituted concerning those parts which are useful, and of which we know the use: the indication of contrivance, with respect to them, remains as it was before.

III. One atheistic way of replying to our observations upon the works of nature, and to the proofs of a Deity which we think that we perceive in them, is to tell us, that all which we see must necessarily have had some form, and that it might as well be its present form as any other. Let us now apply this answer to the eye, as we did before to the watch. Something or other must have occupied that place in the animal's head; must have filled up, we will say, that socket; we will say also, that it must have been of that sort of substance which we call animal substance, as flesh, bone, membrane, cartilage, &c. But that it should have been an *eye*, knowing as we do what an eye comprehends,—*viz.* that it should have consisted, first of a series of transparent lenses (very different, by the by, even in their substance, from the opaque materials of which the rest of the body is, in general at least, composed; and with which the whole of its surface, this single portion of it excepted, is covered;) secondly, of a black cloth or canvass (the only membrane of the body which is black) spread out behind these lenses, so as to receive the image formed by pencils of light transmitted through them; and placed at the precise geometrical distance at which, and at which alone, a distinct image could be formed, namely, at the concourse of the refracted rays: thirdly, of a large nerve communicating between this membrane and the brain; without which, the action of light upon the membrane, however modified by the organ, would be lost to the purposes of sensation:—that this fortunate conformation of parts should have been the lot, not of one individual out of many thousand individuals, like the great prize in a lottery, or like some singularity in nature, but the happy chance of a whole species; nor of one species out of many thousand species, with which we are acquainted, but of by far the greatest number of all that exist;

and that under varieties, not casual, or capricious, but bearing marks of being suited to their respective exigencies:—that all this should have taken place, merely because something must have occupied those points in every animal's forehead;—or, that all this should be thought to be accounted for, by the short answer, "that whatever was there, must have had some form or other," is too absurd to be made more so by any augmentation. We are not contented with this answer; we find no satisfaction in it, by way of accounting for appearances of organization far short of those of the eye, such as we observe in fossil shells, petrified bones, or other substances which bear the vestiges of animal or vegetable recrements, but which, either in respect of utility, or of the situation in which they are discovered, may seem accidental enough. It is no way of accounting even for these things, to say that the stone, for instance, which is shown to us (supposing the question to be concerning a petrifaction,) must have contained some internal conformation or other. Nor does it mend the answer to add, with respect to the singularity of the conformation, that, after the event, it is no longer to be computed what the chances were against it. This is always to be computed, when the question is, whether a useful or imitative conformation be the produce of chance or not: I desire no greater certainty in reasoning, than that by which chance is excluded from the present disposition of the natural world. Universal experience is against it. What does chance ever do for us? in the human body, for instance, chance, *i. e.* the operation of causes without design, may produce a wen, a wart, a mole, a pimple, but never an eye. Amongst inanimate substances, a clod, a pebble, a liquid drop, might be; but never was a watch, a telescope, an organized body of any kind, answering a valuable purpose by a complicated mechanism, the effect of chance. In no assignable instance hath such a thing existed without intention somewhere.

IV. There is another answer, which has the same effect as the resolving of things into chance; which answer would persuade us to believe, that the eye, the animal to which it belongs, every other animal, every plant, indeed every organized body which we see, are only so many out of the possible varieties and combinations of being, which the lapse of infinite ages has brought into existence; that the present world is the relict of that variety; millions of other bodily forms and other species having perished, being by the defect of their constitution incapable of preservation, or of continuance by generation. Now there is no foundation whatever for this conjecture in any thing which we observe in the works of nature; no such experiments are going on at present; no such energy operates, as that which is here supposed, and which should be constantly pushing into existence new varieties of beings. Nor are there any appearances to support an opinion, that every possible combination of vegetable or animal structure has formerly been tried. Multitudes of conformations, both of vegetables and animals, may be conceived capable of existence and succession, which yet do not exist. Perhaps almost as many forms of plants might have been found in the fields, as figures of plants can be delineated upon paper. A countless variety of animals might have existed, which do not exist. Upon the supposition here stated, we should see unicorns and mermaids, sylphs and centaurs, the fancies of painters, and the fables of poets, realized by examples. Or, if it be alleged that these may transgress the limits of possible life and propagation, we might, at least, have nations of human beings without nails upon their fingers, with more or fewer fingers and toes, than ten; some with one eye, others with one ear, with one nostril, or without the sense of smelling at all. All these, and a thousand other imaginable varieties, might live and propagate. We may modify any one species many different ways, all consistent with life, and with the actions necessary to preservation, although affording different degrees of convenience and enjoyment to the animal. And if we carry these modifications through the different species which are known to subsist, their number would be incalculable. No reason can be given why, if these deperdits ever existed, they have now disappeared. Yet, if all possible existences have been tried, they must have formed part of the catalogue.

But, moreover, the division of organized substances into animals and vegetables, and the distribution and sub-distribution of each into genera and species, which distribution is not an arbitrary act of the mind, but founded in the order which prevails in external nature, appear to me to contradict the supposition of the present world being the remains of an indefinite variety of existences; of a variety which rejects all plan. The hypothesis teaches, that every possible variety of being hath, at one time or other, found its way into existence, (by what cause or in what manner is not said,) and that those which were badly formed, perished; but how or why those which survived should be cast, as we see that plants and animals are cast, into regular classes, the hypothesis does not explain; or rather the hypothesis is inconsistent with this phenomenon.

The hypothesis, indeed, is hardly deserving of the consideration which we have given to it. What should we think of a man who, because we had never ourselves seen watches, telescopes, stocking-mills, steam-engines, &c. made, knew not how they were made, or could prove by testimony when they were made, or by whom,—would have us believe that these machines, instead of deriving their curious structures from the thought and design of their inventors and contrivers, in truth derive them from no other origin than this; *viz.* that a mass of metals and other materials having run when melted into all possible figures, and combined themselves in all possible forms, and shapes, and proportions, these things which we see, are what were left from the accident, as best worth preserving; and, as such, are become the remaining stock of a magazine, which, at one time or other, has, by this means, contained every mechanism, useful and useless, convenient and inconvenient, into which such-like materials could be thrown? I cannot distinguish the hypothesis as applied to the works of nature, from this solution, which no one would accept, as applied to a collection of machines.

V. To the marks of contrivance discoverable in animal bodies, and to the argument deduced from them, in proof of design, and of a designing Creator, this turn is sometimes attempted to be given, namely, that the parts were not intended for the use, but that the use arose out of the parts. This distinction is intelligible. A cabinet-maker rubs

his mahogany with fish-skin; yet it would be too much to assert that the skin of the dog-fish was made rough and granulated on purpose for the polishing of wood, and the use of cabinet-makers. Therefore the distinction is intelligible. But I think that there is very little place for it in the works of nature. When roundly and generally affirmed of them, as it hath sometimes been, it amounts to such another stretch of assertion, as it would be to say, that all the implements of the cabinet-maker's work-shop, as well as his fish-skin, were substances accidentally configurated, which he had picked up, and converted to his use; that his adzes, saws, planes, and gimblets, were not made, as we suppose, to hew, cut, and smooth, shape out, or bore wood with; but that, these things being made, no matter with what design, or whether with any, the cabinet-maker perceived that they were applicable to his purpose, and turned them to account.

But again. So far as this solution is attempted to be applied to those parts of animals, the action of which does not depend upon the will of the animal, it is fraught with still more evident absurdity. Is it possible to believe that the eye was formed without any regard to vision; that it was the animal itself which found out, that though formed with no such intention, it would serve to see with; and that the use of the eye, as an organ of sight, resulted from this discovery, and the animal's application of it? The same question may be asked of the ear; the same of all the senses. None of the senses fundamentally depend upon the election of the animal; consequently, neither upon his sagacity, nor his experience. It is the impression which objects make upon them, that constitutes their use. Under that impression, he is passive. He may bring objects to the sense, or within its reach; he may select these objects: but over the impression itself he has no power, or very little; and that properly is the sense.

Secondly, There are many parts of animal bodies which seem to depend upon the will of the animal in a greater degree than the senses do, and yet with respect to which, this solution is equally unsatisfactory. If we apply the solution to the human body, for instance, it forms itself into questions, upon which no reasonable mind can doubt; such as, whether the teeth were made expressly for the mastication of food, the feet for walking, the hands for holding? or whether, these things being as they are, being in fact in the animal's possession, his own ingenuity taught him that they were convertible to these purposes, though no such purposes were contemplated in their formation?

All that there is of the appearance of reason in this way of considering the subject is, that in some cases the organization seems to determine the habits of the animal, and its choice, to a particular mode of life; which, in a certain sense, may be called "the use arising out of the part." Now to all the instances, in which there is any place for this suggestion, it may be replied, that the organization determines the animal to habits beneficial and salutary to itself; and that this effect would not be seen so regularly to follow, if the several organizations did not bear a concerted and contrived relation to the substance by which the animal was surrounded. They would, otherwise, be capacities without objects; powers without employment. The web-foot determines, you say, the duck to swim; but what would that avail, if there were no water to swim in? The strong, hooked bill, and sharp talons, of one species of bird, determine it to prey upon animals; the soft, straight bill and weak claws of another species, determine it to pick up seeds: but neither determination could take effect in providing for the sustenance of the birds, if animal bodies and vegetable seeds did not lie within their reach. The peculiar conformation of the bill and tongue and claws of the woodpecker, determines that bird to search for his food amongst the insects lodged behind the bark, or in the wood, of decayed trees: but what should this profit him, if there were no trees, no decayed trees, no insects lodged under their bark, or in their trunk? The proboscis with which the bee is furnished, determines him to seek for honey: but what would that signify, if flowers supplied none? Faculties thrown down upon animals at random, and without reference to the objects amidst which they are placed, would not produce to them the services and benefits which we see; and if there be that reference, then there is intention.

Lastly, the solution fails entirely when applied to plants. The parts of plants answer their uses, without any concurrence from the will or choice of the plant.

VI. Others have chosen to refer every thing to a *principle of order* in nature. A principle of order is the word: but what is meant by a principle of order, as different from an intelligent Creator, has not been explained either by definition or example; and, without such explanation, it should seem to be a mere substitution of words for reasons, names for causes. Order itself is only the adaptation of means to an end; a principle of order therefore can only signify the mind and intention which so adapts them. Or, were it capable of being explained in any other sense, is there any experience, any analogy, to sustain it? Was a watch ever produced by a principle of order? and why might not a watch be so produced as well as an eye?

Furthermore, a principle of order, acting blindly, and without choice, is negatived by the observation, that order is not universal; which it would be, if it issued from a constant and necessary principle; nor indiscriminate, which it would be, if it issued from an unintelligent principle. Where order is wanted, there we find it; where order is not wanted, *i. e.* where, if it prevailed, it would be useless, there we do not find it. In the structure of the eye, (for we adhere to our example,) in the figure and position of its several parts, the most exact order is maintained. In the forms of rocks and mountains, in the lines which bound the coasts of continents and islands, in the shape of bays and promontories, no order whatever is perceived, because it would have been superfluous. No useful purpose would have arisen from moulding rocks and mountains into regular solids, bounding the channel of the ocean by geometrical curves; or from the map of the world resembling a table of diagrams in Euclid's Elements, or Simpson's Conic Sections.

VII. Lastly, The confidence which we place in our observations upon the works of nature, in the marks which we discover of contrivance, choice, and design, and in our reasoning upon the proofs afforded us, ought not to be shaken, as it is sometimes attempted to be done, by bringing for-

ward to our view our own ignorance, or rather the general imperfection of our knowledge of nature. Nor, in many cases, ought this consideration to affect us, even when it respects some parts of the subject immediately under our notice. True fortitude of understanding consists in not suffering what we know, to be disturbed by what we do not know. If we perceive a useful end, and means adapted to that end, we perceive enough for our conclusion. If these things be clear, no matter what is obscure. The argument is finished. For instance; if the utility of vision to the animal which enjoys it, and the adaptation of the *eye* to this office, be evident and certain, (and I can mention nothing which is more so,) ought it to prejudice the inference which we draw from these premises, that we cannot explain the use of the spleen? Nay, more: if there be parts of the eye, *viz.* the cornea, the crystalline, the retina, in their substance, figure, and position, manifestly suited to the formation of an image by the refraction of rays of light, at least, as manifestly as the glasses and tubes of a dioptric telescope are suited to that purpose; it concerns not the proof which these afford of design, and of a designer, that there may perhaps be other parts, certain muscles for instance, or nerves in the same eye, of the agency or effect of which we can give no account, any more than we should be inclined to doubt, or ought to doubt, about the construction of a telescope, *viz.* for what purpose it was constructed, or whether it were constructed at all, because there belonged to it certain screws and pins, the use or action of which we did not comprehend. I take it to be a general way of infusing doubts and scruples into the mind, to recur to its own ignorance, its own imbecility: to tell us that upon these subjects we know little; that little imperfectly; or rather, that we know nothing properly about the matter. These suggestions so fall in with our consciousness, as sometimes to produce a general distrust of our faculties and our conclusions. But this is an unfounded jealousy. The uncertainty of one thing does not necessarily affect the certainty of another thing. Our ignorance of many points need not suspend our assurance of a few. Before we yield, in any particular instance, to the scepticism which this sort of insinuation would induce, we ought accurately to ascertain, whether our ignorance or doubt concern those precise points upon which our conclusion rests. Other points are nothing. Our ignorance of other points may be of no consequence to these, though they be points, in various respects, of great importance. A just reasoner removes from his consideration, not only what he knows, but what he does not know, touching matters not strictly connected with his argument, *i. e.* not forming the very steps of his deduction: beyond these, his knowledge and his ignorance are alike relative.

CHAPTER VI.

The Argument cumulative.

Were there no example in the world, of contrivance, except that of the *eye*, it would be alone sufficient to support the conclusion which we draw from it, as to the necessity of an intelligent Creator. It could never be got rid of; because it could not be accounted for by any other supposition, which did not contradict all the principles we possess of knowledge; the principles according to which, things do, as often as they can be brought to the test of experience, turn out to be true or false. Its coats and humours, constructed, as the lenses of a telescope are constructed, for the refraction of rays of light to a point, which forms the proper action of the organ; the provision in its muscular tendons for turning its pupil to the object, similar to that which is given to the telescope by screws, and upon which power of direction in the eye, the exercise of its office as an optical instrument depends; the farther provision for its defence, for its constant lubricity and moisture, which we see in its socket and its lids, in its gland for the secretion of the matter of tears, its outlet or communication with the nose for carrying off the liquid after the eye is washed with it; these provisions compose altogether an apparatus, a system of parts, a preparation of means, so manifest in their design, so exquisite in their contrivance, so successful in their issue, so precious, and so infinitely beneficial in their use, as, in my opinion, to bear down all doubt that can be raised upon the subject. And what I wish, under the title of the present chapter, to observe is, that if other parts of nature were inaccessible to our inquiries, or even if other parts of nature presented nothing to our examination but disorder and confusion, the validity of this example would remain the same. If there were but one watch in the world, it would not be less certain that it had a maker. If we had never in our lives seen any but one single kind of hydraulic machine, yet, if of that one kind we understood the mechanism and use, we should be as perfectly assured that it proceeded from the hand, and thought, and skill, of a workman, as if we visited a museum of the arts, and saw collected there twenty different kinds of machines for drawing water, or a thousand different kinds for other purposes. Of this point, each machine is a proof, independently of all the rest. So it is with the evidences of a Divine agency. The proof is not a conclusion which lies at the end of a chain of reasoning, of which chain each instance of contrivance is only a link, and of which, if one link fail, the whole falls; but it is an argument separately supplied by every separate example. An error in stating an example, affects only that example. The argument is cumulative, in the fullest sense of that term. The eye proves it without the ear; the ear without the eye. The proof in each example is complete; for when the design of the part, and the conduciveness of its structure to that design, is shown, the mind may set itself at rest; no future consideration can detract any thing from the force of the example.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the mechanical and immechanical Parts and Functions of Animals and Vegetables.

It is not that *every* part of an animal or vegetable has not proceeded from a contriving mind; or that every part is not constructed with a view to its proper end and purpose, according to the laws belonging to and governing the substance or the action made use of in that part; or that each

part is not so constructed as to effectuate its purpose whilst it operates according to these laws; but it is because these laws themselves are not in all cases equally understood; or, what amounts to nearly the same thing, are not equally exemplified in more simple processes, and more simple machines; that we lay down the distinction, here proposed, between the mechanical parts and other parts of animals and vegetables.

For instance: The principle of muscular motion, *viz.* upon what cause the swelling of the belly of the muscle, and consequent contraction of its tendons, either by an act of the will, or by involuntary irritation, depends, is wholly unknown to us. The substance employed, whether it be fluid, gaseous, elastic, electrical, or none of these, or nothing resembling these, is also unknown to us: of course the laws belonging to that substance, and which regulate its action, are unknown to us. We see nothing similar to this contraction in any machine which we can make, or any process which we can execute. So far (it is confessed) we are in ignorance, but no farther. This power and principle, from whatever cause it proceeds, being assumed, the collocation of the fibres to receive the principle, the disposition of the muscles for the use and application of the power, is mechanical; and is as intelligible as the adjustment of the wires and strings, by which a puppet is moved. We see, therefore, as far as respects the subject before us, what is not mechanical in the animal frame, and what is. The nervous influence (for we are often obliged to give names to things which we know little about)—I say the nervous influence, by which the belly, or middle, of the muscle is swelled, is not mechanical. The utility of the effect we perceive; the means, or the preparation of means, by which it is produced, we do not. But obscurity as to the origin of muscular motion, brings no doubtfulness into our observations upon the sequel of the process: which observations relate, 1*st*, To the constitution of the muscle; in consequence of which constitution, the swelling of the belly or middle part is necessarily and mechanically followed by the contraction of the tendons: 2*dly*, To the number and variety of the muscles, and the corresponding number and variety of useful powers which they supply to the animal; which is astonishingly great: 3*dly*, To the judicious (if we may be permitted to use that term, in speaking of the Author, or of the works, of nature,) to the wise and well-contrived disposition of each muscle for its specific purpose: for moving the joint this way, and that way, and the other way; for pulling and drawing the part to which it is attached, in a determinate and particular direction; which is a mechanical operation, exemplified in a multitude of instances. To mention only one: The tendon of the trochlear muscle of the eye, to the end that it may draw in the line required, is passed through a cartilaginous ring, at which it is reverted, exactly in the same manner as a rope in a ship is carried over a block or round a stay, in order to make it pull in the direction which is wanted. All this, as we have said, is mechanical; and is as accessible to inspection, as capable of being ascertained, as the mechanism of the automaton in the Strand. Suppose the automaton to be put in motion by a magnet (which is probable,) it will supply us with a comparison very apt for our present purpose. Of the magnetic effluvium, we know perhaps as little as we do of the nervous fluid. But, magnetic attraction being assumed (it signifies nothing from what cause it proceeds,) we can trace, or there can be pointed out to us, with perfect clearness and certainty, the mechanism, *viz.* the steel bars, the wheels, the joints, the wires, by which the motion so much admired is communicated to the fingers of the image: and to make any obscurity, or difficulty, or controversy, in the doctrine of magnetism, an objection to our knowledge or our certainty concerning the contrivance, or the marks of contrivance, displayed in the automaton, would be exactly the same thing, as it is to make our ignorance (which we acknowledge) of the cause of nervous agency, or even of the substance and structure of the nerves themselves, a ground of question or suspicion as to the reasoning which we institute concerning the mechanical part of our frame. That an animal is a machine, is a proposition neither correctly true nor wholly false. The distinction which we have been discussing will serve to show how far the comparison, which this expression implies, holds; and wherein it fails. And whether the distinction be thought of importance or not, it is certainly of importance to remember, that there is neither truth nor justice in endeavouring to bring a cloud over our understandings, or a distrust into our reasonings upon this subject, by suggesting that we know nothing of voluntary motion, of irritability, of the principle of life, of sensation, of animal heat, upon all which the animal functions depend; for, our ignorance of these parts of the animal frame concerns not at all our knowledge of the mechanical parts of the same frame. I contend, therefore, that there is mechanism in animals; that this mechanism is as properly such, as it is in machines made by art; that this mechanism is intelligible and certain; that it is not the less so, because it often begins or terminates with something which is not mechanical; that whenever it is intelligible and certain, it demonstrates intention and contrivance, as well in the works of nature as in those of art; and that it is the best demonstration which either can afford.

But whilst I contend for these propositions, I do not exclude myself from asserting, that there may be, and that there are, other cases, in which, although we cannot exhibit mechanism, or prove indeed that mechanism is employed, we want not sufficient evidence to conduct us to the same conclusion.

There is what may be called the *chymical* part of our frame; of which, by reason of the imperfection of our chymistry, we can attain to no distinct knowledge; I mean, not to a knowledge, either in degree or kind, similar to that which we possess of the mechanical part of our frame. It does not, therefore, afford the same species of argument as that which mechanism affords; and yet it may afford an argument in a high degree satisfactory. The *gastric juice*, or the liquor which digests the food in the stomachs of animals, is of this class. Of all menstrua, it is the most active, the most universal. In the human stomach, for instance, consider what a variety of strange substances, and how widely different from one another, it, in a few hours, reduces to a uniform pulp, milk, or mucilage. It seizes upon every thing, it dissolves the texture of almost every thing that comes in its way. The flesh of perhaps all animals; the seeds and fruits of the greatest number of plants; the

roots, and stalks, and leaves, of many, hard and tough as they are, yield to its powerful pervasion. The change wrought by it is different from any chymical solution which we can produce, or with which we are acquainted, in this respect as well as many others, that, in our chymistry, particular menstrua act only upon particular substances. Consider moreover, that this fluid, stronger in its operation than a caustic alkali or mineral acid, than red precipitate, or aqua-fortis itself, is nevertheless as mild, and bland, and inoffensive to the touch or taste, as saliva or gum-water, which it much resembles. Consider, I say, these several properties of the digestive organ, and of the juice with which it is supplied, or rather with which it is made to supply itself, and you will confess it to be entitled to a name, which it has sometimes received, that of "the chymical wonder of animal nature."

Still we are ignorant of the composition of this fluid, and of the mode of its action; by which is meant, that we are not capable, as we are in the mechanical part of our frame, of collating it with the operations of art. And this I call the imperfection of our chymistry; for, should the time ever arrive, which is not perhaps to be despaired of, when we can compound ingredients, so as to form a solvent which will act in the manner in which the gastric juice acts, we may be able to ascertain the chymical principles upon which its efficacy depends, as well as from what part, and by what concoction, in the human body, these principles are generated and derived.

In the mean time, ought that, which is in truth the defect of our chymistry, to hinder us from acquiescing in the inference, which a production of nature, by its place, its properties, its action, its surprising efficacy, its invaluable use, authorises us to draw in respect of a creative design?

Another most subtile and curious function of animal bodies is *secretion*. This function is semi-chymical and semi-mechanical; exceedingly important and diversified in its effects, but obscure in its process and in its apparatus. The importance of the secretory organs is but too well attested by the diseases, which an excessive, a deficient, or a vitiated secretion is almost sure of producing. A single secretion being wrong, is enough to make life miserable, or sometimes to destroy it. Nor is the variety less than the importance. From one and the same blood (I speak of the human body) about twenty different fluids are separated; in their sensible properties, in taste, smell, colour, and consistency, the most unlike one another that is possible; thick, thin, salt, bitter, sweet; and, if from our own we pass to other species of animals, we find amongst their secretions not only the most various, but the most opposite properties; the most nutritious aliment, the deadliest poison; the sweetest perfumes, the most fœtid odours. Of these the greater part, as the gastric juice, the saliva, the bile, the slippery mucilage which lubricates the joints, the tears which moisten the eye, the wax which defends the ear, are, after they are secreted, made use of in the animal economy; are evidently subservient, and are actually contributing to the utilities of the animal itself. Other fluids seem to be separated only to be rejected. That this also is necessary (though why it was originally necessary, we cannot tell,) is shown by the consequence of the separation being long suspended; which consequence is disease and death. Akin to secretion, if not the same thing, is assimilation, by which one and the same blood is converted into bone, muscular flesh, nerves, membranes, tendons; things as different as the wood and iron, canvass and cordage, of which a ship with its furniture is composed. We have no operation of art wherewith exactly to compare all this, for no other reason perhaps than that all operations of art are exceeded by it. No chymical election, no chymical analysis or resolution of a substance into its constituent parts, no mechanical sifting or division, that we are acquainted with, in perfection or variety, come up to animal secretion. Nevertheless, the apparatus and process are obscure; not to say absolutely concealed from our inquiries. In a few, and only a few instances, we can discern a little of the constitution of a gland. In the kidneys of large animals, we can trace the emulgent artery dividing itself into an infinite number of branches; their extremities every where communicating with little round bodies, in the substance of which bodies the secret of the machinery seems to reside, for there the change is made. We can discern pipes laid from these round bodies toward the pelvis, which is a basin within the solid of the kidney. We can discern these pipes joining and collecting together into larger pipes; and, when so collected, ending in innumerable papillæ, through which the secreted fluid is continually oozing into its receptacle. This is all we know of the mechanism of a gland, even in the case in which it seems most capable of being investigated. Yet to pronounce that we know nothing of animal secretion, or nothing satisfactorily, and with that concise remark to dismiss the article from our argument, would be to dispose of the subject very hastily and very irrationally. For the purpose which we want, that of evincing intention, we know a great deal. And what we know is this. We see the blood carried by a pipe, conduit, or duct, *to* the gland. We see an organized apparatus, be its construction or action what it will, which we call that gland. We see the blood, or part of the blood, after it has passed through and undergone the action of the gland, coming *from* it by an emulgent vein or artery, *i. e.* by another pipe or conduit. And we see also at the same time a new and specific fluid issuing from the same gland by its excretory duct, *i. e.* by a third pipe or conduit; which new fluid is in some cases discharged out of the body, in more cases retained within it, and there executing some important and intelligent office. Now supposing, or admitting, that we know nothing of the proper internal constitution of a gland, or of the mode of its acting upon the blood; then our situation is precisely like that of an unmechanical looker on, who stands by a stocking-loom, a corn-mill, a carding-machine, or a thrashing-machine, at work, the fabric and mechanism of which, as well as all that passes within, is hidden from his sight by the outside case; or, if seen, would be too complicated for his uninformed, uninstructed understanding to comprehend. And what is that situation? This spectator, ignorant as he is, sees at one end a material enter the machine, as unground grain the mill, raw cotton the carding-machine, sheaves of unthrashed corn the thrashing-machine; and, when he casts his eye to the other end of the apparatus, he sees the material issuing from it in a new state; and, what is more, in a state manifestly adapted to future uses: the grain in meal fit for the making of bread, the wool

in rovings ready for spinning into threads, the sheaf in corn dressed for the mill. Is it necessary that this man, in order to be convinced that design, that intention, that contrivance, has been employed about the machine, should be allowed to pull it to pieces; should be enabled to examine the parts separately; explore their action upon one another, or their operation, whether simultaneous or successive, upon the material presented to them? He may long to do this to gratify his curiosity; he may desire to do it to improve his theoretic knowledge; or he may have a more substantial reason for requesting it, if he happen, instead of a common visitor, to be a millwright by profession, or a person sometimes called in to repair such-like machines when out of order; but, for the purpose of ascertaining the existence of counsel and design in the formation of the machine, he wants no such intromission or privity. What he sees, is sufficient. The effect upon the material, the change produced in it, the utility of that change for future applications, abundantly testify, be the concealed part of the machine or of its construction what it will, the hand and agency of a contriver.

If any confirmation were wanting to the evidence which the animal secretions afford of design, it may be derived, as has been already hinted, from their variety, and from their appropriation to their place and use. They all come from the same blood: they are all drawn off by glands: yet the produce is very different, and the difference exactly adapted to the work which is to be done, or the end to be answered. No account can be given of this, without resorting to appointment. Why, for instance, is the saliva, which is diffused over the seat of taste, insipid, whilst so many others of the secretions, the urine, the tears, and the sweat, are salt? Why does the gland within the ear separate a viscid substance, which defends that passage; the gland in the upper angle of the eye, a thin brine which washes the ball? Why is the synovia of the joints mucilaginous; the bile bitter, stimulating, and soapy? Why does the juice, which flows into the stomach, contain powers, which make that bowel the great laboratory, as it is by its situation the recipient, of the materials of future nutrition? These are all fair questions; and no answer can be given to them but what calls in intelligence and intention.

My object in the present chapter has been to teach three things: first, that it is a mistake to suppose that, in reasoning from the appearances of nature, the imperfection of our knowledge proportionably affects the certainty of our conclusion; for in many cases it does not affect it at all: secondly, that the different parts of the animal frame may be classed and distributed, according to the degree of exactness with which we can compare them with works of art: thirdly, that the *mechanical* parts of our frame, or those in which this comparison is most complete, although constituting, probably, the coarsest portions of nature's workmanship, are the most proper to be alleged as proofs and specimens of design.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Mechanical Arrangement in the Human Frame.

We proceed, therefore, to propose certain examples taken out of this class: making choice of such as, amongst those which have come to our knowledge, appear to be the most striking, and the best understood; but obliged, perhaps, to postpone both these recommendations to a third; that of the example being capable of explanation without plates, or figures, or technical language.

Of the Bones.

I.—I challenge any man to produce, in the joints and pivots of the most complicated or the most flexible machine that was ever contrived, a construction more artificial, or more evidently artificial than that which is seen in the vertebræ of the *human neck*.—Two things were to be done. The head was to have the power of bending forward and backward, as in the act of nodding, stooping, looking upward or downward; and, at the same time, of turning itself round upon the body to a certain extent, the quadrant we will say, or rather, perhaps, a hundred and twenty degrees of a circle. For these two purposes, two distinct contrivances are employed: First, the head rests immediately upon the uppermost of the vertebræ, and is united to it by a *hinge*-joint; upon which joint the head plays freely forward and backward, as far either way as is necessary, or as the ligaments allow: which was the first thing required. But then the rotatory motion is unprovided for; Therefore, secondly, to make the head capable of this, a farther mechanism is introduced; not between the head and the uppermost bone of the neck, where the hinge is, but between that bone, and the bone next underneath it. It is a mechanism resembling a *tenon and mortice*. This second, or uppermost bone but one, has what anatomists call a process, *viz.* a projection, somewhat similar, in size and shape, to a tooth; which tooth, entering a corresponding hole or socket in the bone above it, forms a pivot or axle, upon which that upper bone, together with the head which it supports, turns freely in a circle; and as far in the circle as the attached muscles permit the head to turn. Thus are both motions perfect, without interfering with each other. When we nod the head, we use the hinge-joint, which lies between the head and the first bone of the neck. When we turn the head round, we use the tenon and mortice, which runs between the first bone of the neck and the second. We see the same contrivance and the same principle employed in the frame or mounting of a telescope. It is occasionally requisite, that the object-end of the instrument be moved up and down, as well as horizontally or equatorially. For the vertical motion, there is a hinge, upon which the telescope plays; for the horizontal or equatorial motion, an axis upon which the telescope and the hinge turn round together. And this is exactly the mechanism which is applied to the motion of the head: nor will any one here doubt of the existence of counsel and design, except it be by that debility of mind, which can trust to its own reasonings in nothing.

We may add, that it was on another account also, expedient, that the motion of the head backward and forward should be performed upon the upper surface of the first vertebræ: for if the first vertebræ itself had bent forward, it would have brought the spinal marrow, at the very beginning of its course, upon the point of the tooth.

II. Another mechanical contrivance, not unlike the last in its object, but different and original in

its means, is seen in what anatomists call the *fore-arm;* that is, in the arm between the elbow and the wrist. Here, for the perfect use of the limb, two motions are wanted: a motion at the elbow backward and forward, which is called a reciprocal motion; and a rotatory motion, by which the palm of the hand, as occasion requires, may be turned upward. How is this managed? the fore-arm, it is well known, consists of two bones, lying along-side each other, but touching only towards the ends. One, and only one, of these bones, is joined to the cubit, or upper part of the arm at the elbow; the other alone, to the hand at the wrist. The first, by means, at the elbow, of a hinge-joint (which allows only of motion in the same plane,) swings backward and forward, carrying along with it the other bone, and the whole fore-arm. In the mean time, as often as there is occasion to turn the palm upward, that other bone to which the hand is attached, rolls upon the first, by the help of a groove or hollow near each end of one bone, to which is fitted a corresponding prominence in the other. If both bones had been joined to the cubit or upper arm, at the elbow, or both to the hand at the wrist, the thing could not have been done. The first was to be at liberty at one end, and the second at the other; by which means the two actions may be performed together. The great bone which carries the fore-arm, may be swinging upon its hinge at the elbow, at the very time that the lesser bone, which carries the hand, may be turning round it in the grooves. The management also of these grooves, or rather the tubercles and grooves, is very observable. The two bones are called the *radius* and the *ulna*. Above, *i.e.* towards the elbow, a tubercle of the radius plays into the socket of the ulna; whilst below, *i.e.* towards the wrist, the radius finds the socket, and the ulna the tubercle. A single bone in the fore-arm, with a ball and socket joint at the elbow, which admits of motion in all directions, might, in some degree, have answered the purpose of both moving the arm and turning the hand. But how much better it is accomplished by the present mechanism, any person may convince himself who puts the ease and quickness with which he can shake his hand at the wrist circularly (moving likewise, if he pleases, his arm at the elbow at the same time,) in competition with the comparatively slow and laborious motion, with which his arm can be made to turn round at the shoulder, by the aid of a ball and socket joint.

III. The *spine*, or back-bone, is a chain of joints of very wonderful construction. Various, difficult, and almost inconsistent offices were to be executed by the same instrument. It was to be firm, yet flexible: (now I know no chain made by art, which is both these; for by firmness I mean, not only strength, but stability:) *firm*, to support the erect position of the body; *flexible*, to allow of the bending of the trunk in all degrees of curvature. It was farther also (which is another, and quite a distinct purpose from the rest) to become a pipe or conduit for the safe conveyance from the brain, of the most important fluid of the animal frame, that, namely, upon which all voluntary motion depends, the spinal marrow; a substance not only of the first necessity to action, if not to life, but of a nature so delicate and tender, so susceptible, and so impatient of injury, as that any unusual pressure upon it, or any considerable obstruction of its course, is followed by paralysis or death. Now the spine was not only to furnish the main trunk for the passage of the medullary substance from the brain, but to give out, in the course of its progress, small pipes therefrom, which being afterward indefinitely subdivided, might, under the name of nerves, distribute this exquisite supply to every part of the body. The same spine was also to serve another use not less wanted than the preceding, *viz.* to afford a fulcrum, stay, or basis (or more properly speaking, a series of these,) for the insertion of the muscles which are spread over the trunk of the body: in which trunk there are not, as in the limbs, cylindrical bones to which they can be fastened: and, likewise, which is a similar use, to furnish a support for the ends of the ribs to rest upon.

Bespeak of a workman a piece of mechanism which shall comprise all these purposes, and let him set about to contrive it: let him try his skill upon it; let him feel the difficulty of accomplishing the task, before he be told how the same thing is effected in the animal frame. Nothing will enable him to judge so well of the wisdom which has been employed; nothing will dispose him to think of it so truly. First, for the firmness, yet flexibility, of the spine; it is composed of a great number of bones (in the human subject, of twenty-four) joined to one another, and compacted by broad bases. The breadth of the bases upon which the parts severally rest, and the closeness of the junction, give to the chain its firmness and stability; the number of parts, and consequent frequency of joints, its flexibility. Which flexibility, we may also observe, varies in different parts of the chain; is least in the back, where strength more than flexure is wanted; greater in the loins, which it was necessary should be more supple than the back; and greatest of all in the neck, for the free motion of the head. Then, secondly, in order to afford a passage for the descent of the medullary substance, each of these bones is bored through in the middle in such a manner, as that, when put together, the hole in one bone falls into a line, and corresponds with the holes in the two bones contiguous to it. By which means, the perforated pieces, when joined, form an entire, close, uninterrupted channel; at least, whilst the spine is upright, and at rest. But as a settled posture is inconsistent with its use, a great difficulty still remained, which was to prevent the vertebræ shifting upon one another, so as to break the line of the canal as often as the body moves or twists; or the joints gaping externally, whenever the body is bent forward, and the spine thereupon made to take the form of a bow. These dangers, which are mechanical, are mechanically provided against. The vertebræ, by means of their processes and projections, and of the articulations which some of these form with one another at their extremities, are so locked in and confined, as to maintain, in what are called the bodies or broad surfaces of the bones, the relative position nearly unaltered; and to throw the change and the pressure, produced by flexion, almost entirely upon the intervening cartilages, the springiness and yielding nature of whose substance admits of all the motion which is necessary to be performed upon them, without any chasms being produced by a separation of the parts. I say, of all the motion which is necessary; for although we bend our backs to every degree almost of inclination, the motion of each vertebræ is very small: such is

the advantage we receive from the chain being composed of so many links, the spine of so many bones. Had it consisted of three or four bones only; in bending the body, the spinal marrow must have been bruised at every angle. The reader need not be told, that these intervening cartilages are gristles; and he may see them in perfection in a loin of veal. Their form also favours the same intention. They are thicker before than behind; so that, when we stoop forward, the compressible substance of the cartilage, yielding in its thicker and interior part to the force which squeezes it, brings the surfaces of the adjoining vertebræ nearer to the being parallel with one another than they were before, instead of increasing the inclination of their planes, which must have occasioned a fissure or opening between them. Thirdly, for the medullary canal giving out in its course, and in a convenient order a supply of nerves to different parts of the body, notches are made in the upper and lower edge of every vertebra; two on each edge; equi-distant on each side from the middle line of the back. When the vertebræ are put together, these notches, exactly fitting, form small holes, through which the nerves, at each articulation, issue out in pairs, in order to send their branches to every part of the body, and with an equal bounty to both sides of the body. The fourth purpose assigned to the same instrument, is the insertion of the bases of the muscles, and the support of the ends of the ribs; and for this fourth purpose, especially the former part of it, a figure, specifically suited to the design, and unnecessary for the other purposes, is given to the constituent bones. Whilst they are plain, and round, and smooth, towards the front, where any roughness or projection might have wounded the adjacent viscera, they run out behind and on each side, into long processes, to which processes the muscles necessary to the motions of the trunk are fixed; and fixed with such art, that, whilst the vertebræ supply a basis for the muscles, the muscles help to keep these bones in their position, or by their tendons to tie them together.

That most important, however, and general property, *viz.* the strength of the compages, and the security against luxation, was to be still more especially consulted: for where so many joints were concerned, and where, in every one a derangement would have been fatal, it became a subject of studious precaution. For this purpose, the vertebræ are articulated, that is, the moveable joints between them are formed by means of those projections of their substance, which we have mentioned under the name of processes; and these so lock in with, and overwrap one another as to secure the body of the vertebra not only from accidentally slipping, but even from being pushed out of its place by any violence short of that which would break the bone. I have often remarked and admired this structure in the chine of a hare. In this, as in many instances, a plain observer of the animal economy may spare himself the disgust of being present at human dissections, and yet learn enough for his information and satisfaction, by even examining the bones of the animals which come upon his table. Let him take, for example, into his hands, a piece of the clean-picked bone of a hare's back; consisting, we will suppose, of three vertebræ. He will find the middle bone of the three so implicated, by means of its projections or processes, with the bone on each side of it, that no pressure which he can use, will force it out of its place between them. It will give way neither forward nor backward, nor on either side. In whichever direction he pushes, he perceives, in the form, or junction, or over-lapping, of the bones, an impediment opposed to his attempt; a check and guard against dislocation. In one part of the spine, he will find a still farther fortifying expedient, in the mode according to which the ribs are annexed to the spine. Each rib rests upon two vertebræ. That is the thing to be remarked, and any one may remark it in carving a neck of mutton. The manner of it is this: the end of the rib is divided by a middle ridge into two surfaces; which surfaces are joined to the bodies of two contiguous vertebræ, the ridge applying itself to the intervening cartilage. Now this is the very contrivance which is employed in the famous iron bridge at my door at Bishop Wearmouth; and for the same purpose of stability; *viz.* the cheeks of the bars, which pass between the arches, ride across the joints, by which the pieces composing each arch are united. Each cross-bar rests upon two of these pieces at their place of junction; and by that position resists, at least in one direction, any tendency in either piece to slip out of its place. Thus perfectly, by one means or the other, is the danger of slipping laterally, or of being drawn aside out of the *line* of the back, provided against: and to withstand the bones being pulled as under longitudinally, or in the direction of that line, a strong membrane runs from one end of the chain to the other, sufficient to resist any force which is ever likely to act in the direction of the back, or parallel to it, and consequently to secure the whole combination in their places. The general result is, that not only the motions of the human body necessary for the ordinary offices of life are performed with safety, but that it is an accident hardly ever heard of, that even the gesticulations of a harlequin distort his spine.

Upon the whole, and as a guide to those who may be inclined to carry the consideration of this subject farther, there are three views under which the spine ought to be regarded, and in all which it cannot fail to excite our admiration. These views relate to its articulations, its ligaments, and its perforation; and to the corresponding advantages which the body derives from it, for action, for strength, and for that which is essential to every part, a secure communication with the brain.

The structure of the spine is not in general different in different animals. In the serpent tribe, however, it is considerably varied; but with a strict reference to the conveniency of the animal. For, whereas, in quadrupeds the number of vertebræ is from thirty to forty, in the serpent it is nearly one hundred and fifty: whereas in men and quadrupeds the surfaces of the bones are flat, and these flat surfaces laid one against the other, and bound tight by sinews; in the serpent, the bones play one within another like a ball and socket,* so that they have a free motion upon one another in every direction: that is to say, in men and quadrupeds, firmness is more consulted; in serpents, pliancy. Yet even pliancy is not obtained at the expense of safety. The back-bone of a serpent, for coherence and flexibility, is one of the most curious pieces of animal mechanism with which we are acquainted. The chain of a

* Der. Phys. Theol. p. 396.

watch (I mean the chain which passes between the spring-barrel and the fusee,) which aims at the same properties, is but a bungling piece of workmanship in comparison with that of which we speak.

IV. The reciprocal enlargement and contraction of the *chest* to allow for the play of the lungs, depends upon a simple yet beautiful mechanical contrivance, referable to the structure of the bones which enclose it. The ribs are articulated to the back-bone, or rather to its side projections, *obliquely:* that is, in their natural position they bend or slope from the place of articulation downwards. But the basis upon which they rest at this end being fixed, the consequence of the obliquity, or the inclination downwards, is, that when they come to move, whatever pulls the ribs upwards, necessarily, at the same time, draws them out; and, that, whilst the ribs are brought to a right angle with the spine behind, the sternum, or part of the chest to which they are attached in front, is thrust forward. The simple action, therefore, of the elevating muscles does the business: whereas, if the ribs had been articulated with the bodies of the vertebræ at right angles, the cavity of the thorax could never have been farther enlarged by a change of their position. If each rib had been a rigid bone, articulated at both ends to fixed bases, the whole chest had been immoveable. Keill has observed, that the breast-bone, in an easy inspiration, is thrust out one tenth of an inch: and he calculates that this, added to what is gained to the space within the chest by the flattening or descent of the diaphragm, leaves room for forty-two cubic inches of air to enter at every drawing-in of the breath. When there is a necessity for a deeper and more laborious inspiration, the enlargement of the capacity of the chest may be so increased by effort, as that the lungs may be distended with seventy or a hundred such cubic inches.* The thorax, says Schelhammer, forms a kind of bellows, such as never have been, nor probably will be, made by any artificer.

V. The *patella*, or knee-pan, is a curious little bone; in its form and office, unlike any other bone of the body. It is circular; the size of a crown piece; pretty thick; a little convex on both sides, and covered with a smooth cartilage. It lies upon the front of the knee; and the powerful tendons, by which the leg is brought forward, pass through it (or rather it makes a part of their continuation,) from their origin in the thigh to their insertion in the tibia. It protects both the tendon and the joint from any injury which either might suffer, by the rubbing of one against the other, or by the pressure of unequal surfaces. It also gives to the tendons a very considerable mechanical advantage, by altering the line of their direction, and by advancing it farther out from the centre of motion; and this upon the principles of the resolution of force, upon which principles all machinery is founded. These are its uses. But what is most observable in it is, that it appears to be supplemental, as it were, to the frame: added, as it should almost seem, afterward; not quite necessary, but very convenient. It is separate from the other bones; that is, it is not connected with any other bones by the common mode of union. It is soft, or hardly formed, in infancy; and produced by an ossification, of the inception or progress of which no account can be given from the structure or exercise of the part.

VI. The *shoulder-blade* is, in some material respects, a very singular bone; appearing to be made so expressly for its own purpose, and so independently of every other reason. In such quadrupeds as have no collar-bones, which are by far the greater number, the shoulder-blade has no bony communication with the trunk, either by a joint or process, or in any other way. It does not grow to, or out of, any other bone of the trunk. It does not apply to any other bone of the trunk: (I know not whether this be true of any second bone in the body, except perhaps the os hyoides:) in strictness it forms no part of the skeleton. It is bedded in the flesh; attached only to the muscles. It is no other than a foundation bone for the arms, laid in, separate, as it were, and distinct, from the general ossification. The lower limbs connect themselves at the hip with bones which form part of the skeleton: but this connexion, in the upper limbs, being wanting, a basis, whereupon the arm might be articulated, was to be supplied by a detached ossification for the purpose.

Of the Joints.

I. The above are a few examples of bones made remarkable by their configuration: but to almost all the bones belong *joints;* and in these, still more clearly than in the form or shape of the bones themselves, are seen both contrivance and contriving wisdom. Every joint is a curiosity, and is also strictly mechanical. There is the hinge-joint, and the mortice and tenon-joint; each as manifestly such, and as accurately defined, as any which can be produced out of a cabinet-maker's shop; and one or the other prevails, as either is adapted to the motion which is wanted: *e. g.* a mortice and tenon, or ball and socket-joint, is not required at the knee, the leg standing in need only of a motion backward and forward in the same plane, for which a hinge-joint is sufficient; a mortice and tenon, or ball and socket-joint, is wanted at the hip, that not only the progressive step may be provided for, but the interval between the limbs may be enlarged or contracted at pleasure. Now observe what would have been the inconveniency, *i. e.* both the superfluity and the defect of articulation, if the case had been inverted: if the ball and socket-joint had been at the knee, and the hinge-joint at the hip. The thighs must have been kept constantly together, and the legs have been loose and straddling. There would have been no use, that we know of, in being able to turn the calves of the legs before; and there would have been great confinement by restraining the motion of the thighs to one plane. The disadvantage would not have been less, if the joints at the hip and the knee had been both of the same sort; both balls and sockets, or both hinges: yet why, independently of utility, and of a Creator who consulted that utility, should the same bone (the thigh-bone) be rounded at one end, and channelled at the other?

The *hinge-joint* is not formed by a bolt passing through the two parts of the hinge, and thus keeping them in their places; but by a different expedient. A strong, tough, parchment-like membrane, rising from the receiving bones, and inserted all round the received bones a little below their heads, encloses the joint on every side. This

* Anat. p. 229.

membrane ties, confines, and holds, the ends of the bones together; keeping the corresponding parts of the joint, *i. e.* the relative convexities and concavities, in close application to each other.

For the *ball and socket-joint,* beside the membrane already described, there is in some important joints, as an additional security, a short, strong, yet flexible ligament, inserted by one end into the head of the ball, by the other into the bottom of the cup; which ligament keeps the two parts of the joint so firmly in their place, that none of the motions which the limb naturally performs, none of the jerks and twists to which it is ordinarily liable, nothing less indeed than the utmost and the most unnatural violence, can pull them asunder. It is hardly imaginable, how great a force is necessary, even to stretch, still more to break, this ligament; yet so flexible is it, as to oppose no impediment to the suppleness of the joint. By its situation also, it is inaccessible to injury from sharp edges. As it cannot be ruptured, (such is its strength,) so it cannot be cut, except by an accident which would sever the limb. If I had been permitted to frame a proof of contrivance, such as might satisfy the most distrustful inquirer, I know not whether I could have chosen an example of mechanism more unequivocal, or more free from objection, than this ligament. Nothing can be more mechanical; nothing, however subservient to the safety, less capable of being generated by the action of the joint. I would particularly solicit the reader's attention to this provision, as it is found in the head of the *thigh-bone;* to its strength, its structure, and its use. It is an instance upon which I lay my hand. One single fact, weighed by a mind in earnest, leaves oftentimes the deepest impression. For the purpose of addressing different understandings and different apprehensions,—for the purpose of sentiment, for the purpose of exciting admiration of the Creator's works, we diversify our views, we multiply examples; but for the purpose of strict argument, one clear instance is sufficient; and not only sufficient, but capable perhaps of generating a firmer assurance than what can arise from a divided attention.

The *ginglymus,* or hinge-joint, does not, it is manifest, admit of a ligament of the same kind with that of the ball and socket-joint, but it is always fortified by the species of ligament of which it does admit. The strong, firm, investing membrane, above described, accompanies it in every part: and in particular joints, this membrane, which is properly a ligament, is considerably stronger on the sides than either before or behind, in order that the convexities may play true in their concavities, and not be subject to slip sideways, which is the chief danger; for the muscular tendons generally restrain the parts from going farther than they ought to go in the plane of their motion. In the *knee,* which is a joint of this form, and of great importance, there are superadded to the common provisions for the stability of the joint, two strong ligaments which cross each other; and cross each other in such a manner, as to secure the joint from being displaced in any assignable direction. "I think," says Cheselden, "that the knee cannot be completely dislocated without breaking the *cross* ligaments."* We can hardly help comparing this with the binding up of a fracture, where the fillet is almost always strapped across, for the sake of giving firmness and strength to the bandage.

Another no less important joint, and that also of the ginglymus sort, is the *ankle;* yet though important, (in order, perhaps, to preserve the symmetry and lightness of the limb,) *small,* and, on that account, more liable to injury. Now this joint is strengthened, *i. e.* is defended from dislocation, by two remarkable processes or prolongations of the bones of the leg; which processes form the protuberances that we call the inner and outer ankle. It is part of each bone going down lower than the other part, and thereby overlapping the joint: so that, if the joint be in danger of slipping outward, it is curbed by the inner projection, *i. e.* that of the tibia; if inward, by the outer projection, *i. e.* that of the fibula. Between both, it is locked in its position. I know no account that can be given of this structure, except its utility. Why should the tibia terminate at its lower extremity, with a double end, and the fibula the same,—but to barricade the joint on both sides by a continuation of part of the thickest of the bone over it? The joint at the *shoulder* compared with the joint at the *hip,* though both ball and socket-joints, discovers a difference in their form and proportions, well suited to the different offices which the limbs have to execute. The cup or socket at the shoulder is much shallower and flatter than it is at the hip, and is also in part formed of cartilage set round the rim of the cup. The socket, into which the head of the thigh-bone is inserted, is deeper, and made of more solid materials. This agrees with the duties assigned to each part. The arm is an instrument of motion, principally, if not solely. Accordingly the shallowness of the socket at the shoulder, and the yieldingness of the cartilaginous substance with which its edge is set round, and which, in fact, composes a considerable part of its concavity, are excellently adapted for the allowance of a free motion and a wide range; both which the arm wants. Whereas, the lower limb, forming a part of the column of the body; having to support the body, as well as to be the means of its locomotion; firmness was to be consulted, as well as action. With a capacity for motion in all directions, indeed, as at the shoulder, but not in any direction to the same extent as in the arm, was to be united stability, or resistance to dislocation. Hence the deeper excavation of the socket; and the presence of a less proportion of cartilage upon the edge.

The suppleness and pliability of the joints, we every moment experience; and the *firmness* of animal articulation, the property we have hitherto been considering, may be judged of from this single observation, that, at any given moment of time, there are millions of animal joints in complete repair and use, for one that is dislocated; and this, notwithstanding the contortions and wrenches to which the limbs of animals are continually subject.

II. The *joints,* or rather the ends of the bones which form them, display also, in their configuration, another use. The nerves, blood-vessels, and tendons, which are necessary to the life, or for the motion, of the limbs, must, it is evident, in their way from the trunk of the body to the place of their destination, travel over the moveable joints; and it is no less evident, that, in this part of their course, they will have, from sudden motions and

* Ches. Anat. ed. 7th. p. 45.

from abrupt changes of curvature, to encounter the danger of comprehension, attrition, or laceration. To guard fibres so tender against consequences so injurious, their path is in those parts protected with peculiar care; and that by a provision, in the figure of the bones themselves. The nerves which supply the *fore-arm*, especially the inferior cubital nerves, are at the elbow conducted, by a kind of covered way, between the condyls, or rather under the inner extuberances of the bone which composes the upper part of the arm.* At the *knee*, the extremity of the thigh-bone is divided by a sinus or cliff into two heads or protuberances: and these heads on the back part stand out beyond the cylinder of the bone. Through the hollow, which lies between the hind parts of these two heads, that is to say, under the ham, between the ham-strings, and within the concave recess of the bone formed by the extuberances on each side; in a word, along a defile between rocks, pass the great vessels and nerves which go to the leg.† Who led these vessels by a road so defended and secured? In the joint at the *shoulder*, in the edge the cup which receives the head of the bone, is a *notch*, which is joined or covered at the top with a ligament. Through this hole, thus guarded, the blood-vessels steal to their destination in the arm, instead of mounting over the edge of the concavity.‡

III. In all joints, the ends of the bones, which work against each other, are tipped with *gristle*. In the ball and socket-joint, the cup is lined, and the ball capped with it. The smooth surface, the elastic and unfriable nature of cartilage, render it of all substances the most proper for the place and purpose. I should, therefore, have pointed this out amongst the foremost of the provisions which have been made in the joints for the facilitating of their action, had it not been alleged, that cartilage, in truth, is only nascent or imperfect bone; and that the bone in these places is kept soft and imperfect, in consequence of a more complete and rigid ossification being prevented from taking place by the continual motion and rubbing of the surfaces: which being so, what we represent as a designed advantage, is an unavoidable effect. I am far from being convinced that this is a true account of the fact; or that, if it were so, it answers the argument. To me, the surmounting of the ends of the bones with gristle, looks more like a plating with a different metal, than like the same metal kept in a different state by the action to which it is exposed. At all events, we have a great particular benefit, though arising from a general constitution: but this last not being quite what my argument requires, lest I should seem by applying the instance to over-rate its value, I have thought it fair to state the question which attends it.

IV. In some joints, very particularly in the knees, there are loose cartilages or gristles between the bones, and within the joint, so that the ends of the bones, instead of working upon one another, work upon the intermediate cartilages. Cheselden has observed,§ that the contrivance of a loose ring is practised by mechanics, where the friction of the joints of any of their machines is great; as between the parts of crook-hinges of large gates, or under the head of the male screw of large vices. The cartilages of which we speak, have very much of the form of these rings. The comparison moreover shows the reason why we find them in the knees rather than in other joints. It is an expedient, we have seen, which a mechanic resorts to, only when some strong and heavy work is to be done. So here the thigh-bone has to achieve its motion at the knee, with the whole weight of the body pressing upon it, and often, as in rising from our seat, with the whole weight of the body to lift. It should seem, also, from Cheselden's account, that the slipping and sliding of the loose cartilages, though it be probably a small and obscure change, humoured the motion of the end of the thigh-bone, under the particular configuration which was necessary to be given to it for the commodious action of the tendons; (and which configuration requires what he calls a variable socket, that is, a concavity, the lines of which assume a different curvature in different inclinations of the bones.)

V. We have now done with the configuration: but there is also in the joints, and that common to them all, another exquisite provision, manifestly adapted to their use, and concerning which there can, I think, be no dispute, namely, the regular supply of a *mucilage*, more emollient and slippery than oil itself, which is constantly softening and lubricating the parts that rub upon each other, and thereby diminishing the effect of attrition in the highest possible degree. For the continual secretion of this important liniment, and for the feeding of the cavities of the joint with it, glands are fixed near each joint; the excretory ducts of which glands, dripping with their balsamic contents, hang loose like fringes within the cavity of the joints. A late improvement in what are called friction-wheels, which consist of a mechanism so ordered, as to be regularly dropping oil into a box, which encloses the axis, the nave, and certain balls upon which the nave revolves, may be said, in some sort, to represent the contrivance in the animal joint; with this superiority, however, on the part of the joint, *viz.* that here, the oil is not only dropped, but *made*.

In considering the joints, there is nothing, perhaps, which ought to move our gratitude more than the reflection, *how well they wear*. A limb shall swing upon its hinge, or play in its socket, many hundred times in an hour, for sixty years together, without diminution of its agility: which is a long time for any thing to last; for any thing so much worked and exercised as the joints are. This durability I should attribute, in part, to the provision which is made for the preventing of wear and tear, first, by the polish of the cartilaginous surfaces; secondly, by the healing lubrication of the mucilage; and, in part, to that astonishing property of animal constitutions, assimilation, by which, in every portion of the body, let it consist of what it will, substance is restored, and waste repaired.

Moveable joints, I think, compose the curiosity of bones; but their union, even where no motion is intended or wanted, carries marks of mechanism and of mechanical wisdom. The teeth, especially the front teeth, are one bone fixed in another, like a peg driven into a board. The sutures of the skull are like the edges of two saws clapped together, in such a manner as that the teeth of one enter the intervals of the other. We have sometimes one bone lapping over another, and

* Ches. Anat. p. 255. ed. 7. † Ib. p. 35.
‡ Ib. p. 50. § Ib. p. 13.

planed down at the edges: sometimes also the thin lamella of one bone received into a narrow furrow of another. In all which varieties, we seem to discover the same design, *viz.* firmness of juncture, without clumsiness in the seam.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Muscles.

Muscles, with their tendons, are the instruments by which animal motion is performed. It will be our business to point out instances in which, and properties with respect to which, the disposition of these muscles is as strictly mechanical, as that of the wires and strings of a puppet.

I. We may observe, what I believe is universal, an exact relation between the joint and the muscles which move it. Whatever motion the joint, by its mechanical construction, is capable of performing, that motion, the annexed muscles, by their position, are capable of producing. For example; if there be, as at the knee and elbow, a hinge-joint, capable of motion only in the same plane, the leaders, as they are called, *i. e.* the muscular tendons, are placed in directions parallel to the bone, so as, by the contraction or relaxation of the muscles to which they belong, to produce that motion and no other. If these joints were capable of a freer motion, there are no muscles to produce it. Whereas at the shoulder and the hip, where the ball and socket-joint allows by its construction of a rotatory or sweeping motion, tendons are placed in such a position, and pull in such a direction, as to produce the motion of which the joint admits. For instance, the sartorius or tailor's muscle, rising from the spine, running diagonally across the thigh, and taking hold of the inside of the main bone of the leg, a little below the knee, enables us, by its contraction, to throw one leg and thigh over the other; giving effect, at the same time, to the ball and socket-joint at the hip, and the hinge-joint at the knee. There is, as we have seen, a specific mechanism in the bones, for the rotatory motions of the head and hands: there is, also, in the oblique direction of the muscles belonging to them, a specific provision for the putting of this mechanism of the bones into action. And mark the consent of uses. The oblique muscles would have been inefficient without that particular articulation: that particular articulation would have been lost, without the oblique muscles. It may be proper however to observe, with respect to the *head*, although I think it does not vary the case, that its oblique motions and inclinations are often motions in a *diagonal*, produced by the joint action of muscles lying in straight directions. But whether the pull be single or combined, the articulation is always such, as to be capable of obeying the action of the muscles. The oblique muscles attached to the head, are likewise so disposed, as to be capable of steadying the globe, as well as of moving it. The head of a new-born infant is often obliged to be filleted up. After death, the head drops and rolls in every direction. So that it is by the equilibre of the muscles, by the aid of a considerable and equipollent muscular force in constant exertion, that the head maintains its erect posture. The muscles here supply what would otherwise be a great defect in the articulation: for the joint in the neck, although admirably adapted to the motion of the head, is insufficient for its support. It is not only by the means of a most curious structure of the bones that a man turns his head, but by virtue of an adjusted muscular power, that he even holds it up.

As another example of what we are illustrating, *viz.* conformity of use between the bones and the muscles, it has been observed of the different vertebræ, that their processes are exactly proportioned to the quantity of motion which the other bones allow of, and which the respective muscles are capable of producing.

II. A muscle acts only by contraction. Its force is exerted in no other way. When the exertion ceases, it relaxes itself, that is, it returns by relaxation to its former state, but without energy. This is the nature of the muscular fibre; and being so, it is evident that the reciprocal *energetic* motion of the limbs, by which we mean motion *with force* in opposite directions, can only be produced by the instrumentality of opposite or antagonist muscles; of flexors and extensors answering to each other. For instance, the biceps and brachiæus *internus* muscles placed in the front part of the upper arm, by their contraction, bend the elbow; and with such degree of force, as the case requires, or the strength admits of. The relaxation of these muscles, after the effort, would merely let the fore-arm drop down. For the *back stroke*, therefore, and that the arm may not only bend at the elbow, but also extend and straighten itself, with force, other muscles, the longus and brevis brachiæus *externus* and the anconæus, placed on the hinder part of the arms, by their contractile twitch fetch back the fore-arm into a straight line with the cubit, with no less force than that with which it was bent out of it. The same thing obtains in all the limbs, and in every moveable part of the body. A finger is not bent and straightened, without the *contraction* of two muscles taking place. It is evident, therefore, that the animal functions require that particular disposition of the muscles which we describe by the name of antagonist muscles. And they are accordingly so disposed. Every muscle is provided with an adversary. They act, like two sawyers in a pit, by an opposite pull: and nothing surely can more strongly indicate design and attention to an end, than their being thus stationed, than this collocation. The nature of the muscular fibre being what it is, the purposes of the animal could be answered by no other. And not only the capacity for motion, but the aspect and symmetry of the body, is preserved by the muscles being marshalled according to this order; *e. g.* the mouth is holden in the middle of the face, and its angles kept in a state of exact correspondency, by two muscles drawing against, and balancing each other. In a hemiplegia, when the muscle on one side is weakened, the muscle on the other side draws the mouth awry.

III. Another property of the muscles, which could only be the result of care, is, their being almost universally so disposed, as not to obstruct or interfere with one another's action. I know but one instance in which this impediment is perceived. We cannot easily swallow whilst we gape. This, I understand, is owing to the muscles employed in the act of deglutition being so implicated with the muscles of the lower jaw, that, whilst these

lest are contracted, the former cannot act with freedom. The obstruction is, in this instance, attended with little inconveniency; but it shows what the effect is where it does exist; and what loss of faculty there would be if it were more frequent. Now when we reflect upon the number of muscles, not fewer than four hundred and forty-six in the human body, known and named,* how contiguous they lie to each other, in layers, as it were, over one another, crossing one another, sometimes imbedded in one another, sometimes perforating one another; an arrangement, which leaves to each its liberty, and its full play, must necessarily require meditation and counsel.

IV. The following is oftentimes the case with the muscles. Their action is wanted, where their situation would be inconvenient. In which case, the body of the muscle is placed in some commodious position at a distance, and made to communicate with the point of action, by slender strings or wires. If the muscles which move the fingers had been placed in the palm or back of the hand, they would have swelled that part to an awkward and clumsy thickness. The beauty, the proportions of the part, would have been destroyed. They are therefore disposed in the arm, and even up to the elbow; and act by long tendons, strapped down at the wrist, and passing under the ligaments to the fingers, and to the joints of the fingers, which they are severally to move. In like manner, the muscles which move the toes, and many of the joints of the foot, how gracefully are they disposed in the calf of the leg, instead of forming an unwieldy tumefaction in the foot itself? The observation may be repeated of the muscle which draws the nictitating membrane over the eye; its office is in the front of the eye; but its body is lodged in the back part of the globe, where it lies safe, and where it encumbers nothing.

V. The great mechanical variety of the figure of the muscles may be thus stated. It appears to be a fixed law, that the contraction of a muscle shall be towards its centre. Therefore the subject for mechanism on each occasion is, so to modify the figure, and adjust the position of the muscle, as to produce the motion required, agreeably with this law. This can only be done by giving to different muscles a diversity of configuration, suited to their several offices, and to their situation with respect to the work which they have to perform. On which account we find them under a multiplicity of forms and attitudes; sometimes with double, sometimes with treble tendons, sometimes with none: sometimes one tendon to several muscles, at other times one muscle to several tendons. The shape of the organ is susceptible of an incalculable variety, whilst the original property of the muscle, the law and line of its contraction, remains the same, and is simple. Herein the muscular system may be said to bear a perfect resemblance to our works of art. An artist does not alter the native quality of his materials, or their laws of action. He takes these as he finds them. His skill and ingenuity are employed in turning them, such as they are, to his account, by giving to the parts of his machine a form and relation, in which these unalterable properties may operate to the production of the effects intended.

VI. The ejaculations can never too often be repeated—How many things must go right for us to be an hour at ease! how many more for us to be vigorous and active! Yet vigour and activity are, in a vast plurality of instances, preserved in human bodies, notwithstanding that they depend upon so great a number of instruments of motion, and notwithstanding that the defect or disorder sometimes of a very small instrument, of a single pair, for instance, out of the four hundred and forty-six muscles which are employed, may be attended with grievous inconveniency. There is piety and good sense in the following observation, taken out of the *Religious Philosopher:* "With much compassion," says this writer, "as well as astonishment at the goodness of our loving Creator, have I considered the sad state of a certain gentleman, who, as to the rest, was in pretty good health, but only wanted the use of these *two little muscles* that serve to lift up the eyelids, and so had almost lost the use of his sight, being forced, as long as this defect lasted, to shove up his eyelids every moment with his own hands!"—In general we may remark in how small a degree those, who enjoy the perfect use of their organs, know the comprehensiveness of the blessing, the variety of their obligation. They perceive a result, but they think little of the multitude of concurrences and rectitudes which go to form it.

Beside these observations, which belong to the muscular organ as such, we may notice some advantages of structure which are more conspicuous in muscles of a certain class or description than in others. Thus:

I. The variety, quickness, and precision, of which muscular motion is capable, are seen, I think, in no part so remarkably as in the *tongue*. It is worth any man's while to watch the agility of his tongue; the wonderful promptitude with which it executes changes of position, and the perfect exactness. Each syllable of articulated sound requires for its utterance a specific action of the tongue and of the parts adjacent to it. The disposition and configuration of the mouth, appertaining to every letter and word, is not only peculiar, but, if nicely and accurately attended to, perceptible to the sight; in so much, that curious persons have availed themselves of this circumstance to teach the deaf to speak, and to understand what is said by others. In the same person, and after his habit of speaking is formed, one, and only one, position of the parts, will produce a given articulate sound correctly. How instantaneously are these positions assumed and dismissed; how numerous are the permutations, how various, yet how infallible! Arbitrary and antic variety is not the thing we admire; but variety obeying a rule, conducing to an effect, and commensurate with exigencies infinitely diversified. I believe also that the anatomy of the tongue corresponds with these observations upon its activity. The muscles of the tongue are so numerous, and so implicated with one another, that they cannot be traced by the nicest dissection; nevertheless, (which is a great perfection of the organ,) neither the number, nor the complexity, nor what might seem to be the entanglement of its fibres, in any wise impede its motion, or render the determination or success of its efforts uncertain.

I HERE entreat the reader's permission to step a little out of my way, to consider *the parts of the*

*Keill's Anatomy, p. 295. ed. 3.

mouth, in some of their other properties. It has been said, and that by an eminent physiologist, that whenever nature attempts to work two or more purposes by one instrument, she does both or all imperfectly. Is this true of the tongue, regarded as an instrument of speech, and of taste; or regarded as an instrument of speech, of taste, and of deglutition? So much otherwise, that many persons, that is to say, nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of a thousand, by the instrumentality of this one organ, talk, and taste, and swallow, very well. In fact, the constant warmth and moisture of the tongue, the thinness of the skin, the papillæ upon its surface, qualify this organ for its office of tasting, as much as its inextricable multiplicity of fibres do for the rapid movements which are necessary to speech. Animals which feed upon grass, have their tongues covered with a perforated skin, so as to admit the dissolved food to the papillæ underneath, which, in the mean time, remain defended from the rough action of the unbruised spiculæ.

There are brought together within the cavity of the mouth more distinct uses, and parts executing more distinct offices, than I think can be found lying so near to one another, or within the same compass, in any other portion of the body: *viz.* teeth of different shape, first for cutting, secondly for grinding; muscles, most artificially disposed for carrying on the compound motion of the lower jaw, half lateral and half vertical, by which the mill is worked: fountains of saliva, springing up in different parts of the cavity for the moistening of the food, whilst the mastication is going on: glands, to feed the fountains; a muscular constriction of a very peculiar kind in the back part of the cavity, for the guiding of the prepared aliment into its passage towards the stomach, and in many cases for carrying it along that passage; for, although we may imagine this to be done simply by the weight of the food itself, it in truth is not so, even in the upright posture of the human neck; and most evidently is not the case with quadrupeds, with a horse for instance, in which, when pasturing, the food is thrust upward by muscular strength, instead of descending of its own accord.

In the mean time, and within the same cavity, is going on another business, altogether different from what is here described,—that of respiration and speech. In addition therefore to all that has been mentioned, we have a passage opened, from this cavity to the lungs for the admission of air, exclusively of every other substance; we have muscles, some in the larynx, and without number in the tongue, for the purpose of modulating that air in its passage, with a variety, a compass, and precision, of which no other musical instrument is capable. And, lastly, which in my opinion crowns the whole as a piece of machinery, we have a specific contrivance for dividing the pneumatic part from the mechanical, and for preventing one set of actions interfering with the other. Where various functions are united, the difficulty is to guard against the inconveniences of a too great complexity. In no apparatus put together by art, and for the purposes of art, do I know such multifarious uses so aptly combined, as in the natural organization of the human mouth; or where the structure compared with the uses, is so simple. The mouth, with all these intentions to serve, is a single cavity; is one machine; with its parts neither crowded nor confused, and each unembarrassed by the rest: each at least at liberty in a degree sufficient for the end to be attained. If we cannot eat and sing at the same moment, we can eat one moment, and sing the next: the respiration proceeding freely all the while.

There is one case however of this double office, and that of the *earliest* necessity, which the mouth alone could not perform; and that is, carrying on together the two actions of sucking and breathing. Another rout therefore is opened for the air, namely through the nose, which lets the breath pass backward and forward, whilst the lips, in the act of sucking, are necessarily shut close upon the body from which the nutriment is drawn. This is a circumstance which always appeared to me worthy of notice. The nose would have been necessary, although it had not been the organ of smelling. The making it the seat of a sense was superadding a new use to a part already wanted; was taking a wise advantage of an antecedent and a constitutional necessity.

But to return to that which is the proper subject of the present section,—the celerity and precision of muscular motion. These qualities may be particularly observed in the execution of many species of instrumental *music*, in which the changes produced by the hand of the musician are exceedingly rapid; are exactly measured, even when most minute; and display, on the part of the muscles, an obedience of action, alike wonderful for its quickness and its correctness.

Or let a person only observe his own hand whilst he is *writing*; the number of muscles, which are brought to bear upon the pen; how the joint and adjusted operation of several tendons is concerned in every stroke, yet that five hundred such strokes are drawn in a minute. Not a letter can be turned without more than one, or two, or three tendinous contractions, definite, both as to the choice of the tendon, and as to the space through which the contraction moves; yet how currently does the work proceed! and when we look at it, how faithful have the muscles been to their duty, how true to the order which endeavour or habit hath inculcated! For let it be remembered, that, whilst a man's handwriting is the same, an exactitude of order is preserved, whether he write well, or ill. These two instances, of music and writing, show not only the quickness and precision of muscular action, but the docility.

II. Regarding the particular configuration of muscles, *sphincter* or circular muscles appear to me admirable pieces of mechanism. It is the muscular power most happily applied; the same quality of the muscular substance, but under a new modification. The circular disposition of the fibres is strictly mechanical; but, though the most mechanical, is not the only thing in sphincters which deserves our notice. The regulated degree of contractile force with which they are endowed, sufficient for retention, yet vincible when requisite, together with their ordinary state of actual contraction, by means of which their dependence upon the will is not constant, but occasional, gives them a constitution, of which the conveniency is inestimable. This their semi-voluntary character, is exactly such as suits with the wants and functions of the animal.

III. We may also, upon the subject of muscles, observe, that many of our most important actions

are achieved by the combined help of different muscles. Frequently, a diagonal motion is produced, by the contraction of tendons pulling in the direction of the sides of the parallelogram. This is the case, as hath been already noticed, with some of the oblique nutations of the head. Sometimes the number of co-operating muscles is very great. Dr. Nieuentyt, in the Leipsic Transactions, reckons up a hundred muscles that are employed every time we breathe; yet we take in, or let out, our breath, without reflecting what a work is thereby performed; what an apparatus is laid in, of instruments for the service, and how many such contribute their assistance to the effect! Breathing with ease, is a blessing of every moment; yet, of all others, it is that which we possess with the least consciousness. A man in an asthma is the only man who knows how to estimate it.

IV. Mr. Home has observed,* that the most important and the most delicate actions are performed in the body by the smallest muscles: and he mentions, as his examples, the muscles which have been discovered in the iris of the eye, and the drum of the ear. The tenuity of these muscles is astonishing. They are microscopic hairs; must be magnified to be visible; yet are they real, effective muscles: and not only such, but the grandest and most precious of our faculties, sight and hearing, depend upon their health and action.

V. The muscles act in the limbs with what is called a mechanical disadvantage. The muscle at the shoulder, by which the arm is raised, is fixed nearly in the same manner as the load is fixed upon a steelyard, within a few decimals, we will say, of an inch, from the centre upon which the steelyard turns. In this situation, we find that a very heavy draught is no more than sufficient to countervail the force of a small lead plummet, placed upon the long arm of the steelyard, at the distance of perhaps fifteen or twenty inches from the centre, and on the other side of it. And this is the disadvantage which is meant. And an absolute disadvantage, no doubt, it would be, if the object were, to spare the force of muscular contraction. But observe how conducive is this constitution to animal conveniency. Mechanism has always in view one or other of these two purposes; either to move a great weight slowly, and through a small space, or to move a light weight rapidly, through a considerable sweep. For the former of these purposes, a different species of lever, and a different collocation of the muscles, might be better than the present; but for the second, the present structure is the true one. Now so it happens, that the second, and not the first, is that which the occasions of animal life principally call for. In what concerns the human body, it is of much more consequence to any man to be able to carry his hand to his head with due expedition, than it would be to have the power of raising from the ground a heavier load (of two or three more hundred weight, we will suppose,) than he can lift at present. This last is a faculty, which, on some extraordinary occasions, he may desire to possess; but the other is what he wants and uses every hour or minute. In like manner, a husbandman or a gardener will do more execution, by being able to carry his scythe, his rake, or his flail, with a sufficient despatch through a sufficient space, than if, with greater strength, his motions were proportionably more confined and slow. It is the same with a mechanic in the use of his tools. It is the same also with other animals in the use of their limbs. In general, the vivacity of their motions would be ill exchanged for greater force under a clumsier structure.

We have offered our observations upon the structure of muscles in general; we have also noticed certain species of muscles; but there are also *single* muscles which bear marks of mechanical contrivance, appropriate as well as particular. Out of many instances of this kind, we select the following.

I. Of muscular actions, even of those which are well understood, some of the most curious are incapable of popular explanation; at least, without the aid of plates and figures. This is in a great measure the case, with a very familiar, but at the same time, a very complicated motion,—that of the *lower jaw;* and with the muscular structure by which it is produced. One of the muscles concerned may, however, be described in such a manner, as to be, I think, sufficiently comprehended for our present purpose. The problem is to pull the lower jaw *down*. The obvious method should seem to be, to place a straight muscle, *viz.* to fix a string from the chin to the breast, the contraction of which would open the mouth and produce the motion required at once. But it is evident that the form and liberty of the neck forbid a muscle being laid in such a position; and that, consistently with the preservation of this form, the motion, which we want, must be effectuated by some muscular mechanism disposed farther back in the jaw. The mechanism adopted is as follows. A certain muscle called the *digastric*, rises on the side of the face, considerably *above* the insertion of the lower jaw, and comes down, being converted in its progress into a round tendon. Now it is manifest that the tendon, whilst it pursues a direction *descending* towards the jaw, must, by its contraction, pull the jaw up, instead of down. What then was to be done? This, we find, is done: the descending tendon, when it is got low enough, is passed through a loop, or ring, or pulley, in the os hyoïdes, and then made to ascend; and having thus changed its line of direction, is inserted into the inner part of the chin: by which device, *viz.* the turn at the loop, the action of the muscle (which in all muscles is contraction) that before would have pulled the jaw up, now as necessarily draws it down. "The mouth," says Heister, "is opened by means of this trochlea in a most wonderful and elegant manner."

II. What contrivance can be more mechanical than the following, *viz.* a slit in one tendon to let another tendon pass through it? This structure is found in the tendons which move the toes and fingers. The long tendon, as it is called, in the foot, which bends the first joint of the toe, passes *through* the short tendon which bends the second joint; which course allows to the sinew more liberty, and a more commodious action than it would otherwise have been capable of exerting.* There is nothing, I believe, in a silk or cotton mill, in the belts, or straps, or ropes, by which motion is communicated from one part of the machine to another, that is more artificial, or more evidently so, than this *perforation*.

* Phil. Trans. part. i. 1800. p. 8.

* Ches. Anat. p. 119.

III. The next circumstance which I shall mention, under this head of muscular arrangement, is so decisive a mark of intention, that it always appeared to me to supersede, in some measure, the necessity of seeking for any other observation upon the subject; and that circumstance is, the tendons, which pass from the leg to the foot, being bound down by a ligament at the ankle. The foot is placed at a considerable angle with the leg. It is manifest, therefore, that flexible strings, passing along the interior of the angle, if left to themselves, would, when stretched, start from it. The obvious preventive is to tie them down. And this is done in fact. Across the instep, or rather just above it, the anatomist finds a strong ligament, *under* which the tendons pass to the foot. The effect of the ligament as a bandage can be made evident to the senses; for if it be cut, the tendons start up. The simplicity, yet the clearness of this contrivance, its exact resemblance to established resources of art, place it amongst the most indubitable manifestations of design with which we are acquainted.

There is also a farther use to be made of the present example, and that is, as it precisely contradicts the opinion, that the parts of animals may have been all formed by what is called *appetency*, *i. e.* endeavour, perpetuated, and imperceptibly working its effect, through an incalculable series of generations. We have here no endeavour, but the reverse of it; a constant renitency and reluctance. The endeavour is all the other way. The pressure of the ligament constrains the tendons; the tendons re-act upon the pressure of the ligament. It is impossible that the ligament should ever have been generated by the exercise of the tendon, or in the course of that exercise, forasmuch as the force of the tendon perpendicularly resists the fibre which confines it, and is constantly endeavouring, not to form, but to rupture and displace the threads of which the ligament is composed.

Keill has reckoned up, in the human body, four hundred and forty-six muscles, dissectible and describable: and hath assigned a use to every one of the number. This cannot be all imagination.

Bishop Wilkins hath observed from Galen, that there are, at least, ten several qualifications to be attended to in each particular muscle; *viz.* its just magnitude; its fulcrum; its point of action, supposing the figure to be fixed; its collocation, with respect to its two ends, the upper and the lower; the place; the position of the whole muscle; the introduction into it of nerves, arteries, veins. How are things, including so many adjustments, to be made; or, when made, how are they to be put together without intelligence?

I have sometimes wondered why we are not struck with mechanism in animal bodies, as readily and as strongly as we are struck with it, at first sight, in a watch or a mill. One reason of the difference may be, that animal bodies are, in a great measure, made up of soft, flabby substances, such as muscles and membranes; whereas we have been accustomed to trace mechanism in sharp lines, in the configuration of hard materials, in the moulding, chiselling, and filing into shapes, of such articles as metals or wood. There is something therefore of habit in the case; but it is sufficiently evident, that there can be no proper reason for any distinction of the sort. Mechanism may be displayed in the one kind of substance, as well as in the other.

Although the few instances we have selected, even as they stand in our description, are nothing short perhaps of logical proofs of design, yet it must not be forgotten, that, in every part of anatomy, description is a poor substitute for inspection. It is well said by an able anatomist,* and said in reference to the very part of the subject which we have been treating of:—"Imperfecta hæc musculorum descriptio, non minùs arida est legentibus, quàm inspectantibus fuerit jucunda eorundem præparatio. Elegantissima enim mechanicês artificia, creberrimè in illis obvia, verbis nonnisi obscurè exprimuntur: carnium autem ductu, tendinum colore, insertionum proportione, et trochlearium distributione, oculis exposita, omnem superant admirationem."

CHAPTER X.

Of the Vessels of Animal Bodies.

The circulation of the *blood*, through the bodies of men and quadrupeds, and the apparatus by which it is carried on, compose a system, and testify a contrivance, perhaps the best understood of any part of the animal frame. The lymphatic system, or the nervous system, may be more subtile and intricate: nay, it is possible, that in their structure they may be even more artificial than the sanguiferous, but we do not know so much about them.

The utility of the circulation of the blood I assume as an acknowledged point. One grand purpose is plainly answered by it; the distributing to every part, every extremity, every nook and corner of the body, the nourishment which is received into it by one aperture. What enters at the mouth, finds its way to the fingers' ends. A more difficult mechanical problem could hardly I think be proposed, than to discover a method of constantly repairing the waste, and of supplying an accession of substance to every part of a complicated machine, at the same time.

This system presents itself under two views: first, the disposition of the blood-vessels, *i. e.* the laying of the pipes; and, secondly, the construction of the engine at the centre, *viz.* the heart, for driving the blood through them.

I. The disposition of the blood-vessels, as far as regards the supply of the body, is like that of the water-pipes in a city, *viz.* large and main trunks branching off by smaller pipes (and these again by still narrower tubes) in every direction, and towards every part in which the fluid, which they convey, can be wanted. So far the water-pipes which serve a town may represent the vessels which carry the blood from the heart. But there is another thing necessary to the blood, which is not wanted for the water; and that is, the carrying of it back again to its source. For this office, a reversed system of vessels is prepared, which, uniting at their extremities with the extremities of the first system, collects the divided and subdivided streamlets, first by capillary ramifications into larger branches, secondly, by these branches

* Steno, in Blas. Anat. Animal. p. 2. c. 4.

into trunks; and thus returns the blood (almost exactly inverting the order in which it went out) to the fountain whence its motion proceeded. All which is evident mechanism.

The body, therefore, contains two systems of blood-vessels, arteries, and veins. Between the constitution of the systems there are also two differences, suited to the functions which the systems have to execute. The blood, in going out, passing always from wider into narrower tubes; and, in coming back, from narrower into wider; it is evident, that the impulse and pressure upon the sides of the blood-vessel, will be much greater in one case than the other. Accordingly the arteries which carry out the blood, are formed of much tougher and stronger coats, than the veins which bring it back. That is one difference: the other is still more artificial, or, if I may so speak, indicates, still more clearly, the care and anxiety of the artificer. Forasmuch as in the arteries, by reason of the greater force with which the blood is urged along them, a wound or rupture would be more dangerous than in the veins, these vessels are defended from injury, not only by their texture, but by their situation; and by every advantage of situation which can be given to them. They are buried in sinuses, or they creep along grooves, made for them in the bones: for instance, the under edge of the ribs is sloped and furrowed solely for the passage of these vessels. Sometimes they proceed in channels, protected by stout parapets on each side; which last description is remarkable in the bones of the fingers, these being hollowed out on the under-side, like a scoop, and with such a concavity, that the finger may be cut across to the bone, without hurting the artery which runs along it. At other times, the arteries pass in canals wrought in the substance, and in the very middle of the substance, of the bone: this takes place in the lower jaw; and is found where there would otherwise be danger of compression by sudden curvature. All this care is wonderful, yet not more than what the importance of the case required. To those who venture their lives in a ship, it has been often said, that there is only an inch-board between them and death; but in the body itself, especially in the arterial system, there is, in many parts, only a membrane, a skin, a thread. For which reason, this system lies deep under the integuments; whereas the veins, in which the mischief that ensues from injuring the coats is much less, lie in general above the arteries; come nearer to the surface; are more exposed.

It may be farther observed concerning the two systems taken together, that though the arterial, with its trunk and branches and small twigs, may be imagined to issue or proceed, in other words, to *grow* from, the heart; like a plant from its root, or the fibres of a leaf from its foot-stalk, (which, however, were it so, would be only to resolve one mechanism into another,) yet the venal, the returning system, can never be formed in this manner. The arteries might go on shooting out from their extremities, *i. e.* lengthening and subdividing indefinitely; but an inverted system, continually uniting its streams, instead of dividing, and thus carrying back what the other system carried out, could not be referred to the same process.

II. The next thing to be considered is the engine which works this machinery, *viz.* the *heart*. For our purpose it is unnecessary to ascertain the principle upon which the heart acts. Whether it be irritation excited by the contact of the blood, by the influx of the nervous fluid, or whatever else be the cause of its motion, it is something which is capable of producing, in a living muscular fibre, reciprocal contraction and relaxation. This is the power we have to work with: and the inquiry is, how this power is applied in the instance before us? There is provided, in the central part of the body, a hollow muscle, invested with spiral fibres, running in both directions, the layers intersecting one another; in some animals, however, appearing to be semi-circular rather than spiral. By the contraction of these fibres, the sides of the muscular cavities are necessarily squeezed together, so as to force out from them any fluid which they may at that time contain: by the relaxation of the same fibres, the cavities are in their turn dilated, and, of course, prepared to admit every fluid which may be poured into them. Into these cavities are inserted the great trunks, both of the arteries which carry out the blood, and of the veins which bring it back. This is a general account of the apparatus; and the simplest idea of its action is, that, by each contraction, a portion of blood is forced by a syringe into the arteries; and, at each dilatation, an equal portion is received from the veins. This produces, at each pulse, a motion, and change in the mass of blood, to the amount of what the cavity contains, which, in a full-grown human heart, I understand is about an ounce, or two table-spoons full. How quickly these changes succeed one another, and by this succession how sufficient they are to support a stream or circulation throughout the system, may be understood by the following computation, abridged from Keill's Anatomy, p. 117. ed. 3; "Each ventricle will at least contain one ounce of blood. The heart contracts four thousand times in one hour; from which it follows, that there pass through the heart, every hour, four thousand ounces, or three hundred and fifty pounds of blood. Now the whole mass of blood is said to be about twenty-five pounds; so that a quantity of blood, equal to the whole mass of blood, passes through the heart fourteen times in one hour; which is about once every four minutes." Consider what an affair this is, when we come to very large animals. The aörta of a whale is larger in the bore than the main pipe of the water-works at London Bridge; and the water roaring in its passage through that pipe is inferior, in impetus and velocity, to the blood gushing from the whale's heart. Hear Dr. Hunter's account of the dissection of a whale:—"The aörta measured a foot diameter. Ten or fifteen gallons of blood are thrown out of the heart at a stroke, with an immense velocity, through a tube of a foot diameter. The whole idea fills the mind with wonder."*

The account which we have here stated, of the injection of blood into the arteries by the contraction, and of the corresponding reception of it from the veins by the dilatation, of the cavities of the heart, and, of the circulation being thereby maintained through the blood-vessels of the body, is true, but imperfect. The heart performs this office, but it is in conjunction with another of

* Dr Hunter's Account of the Dissection of a Whale.—Phil. Trans.

equal curiosity and importance. It was necessary that the blood should be successively brought into contact, or contiguity, or proximity, with the *air*. I do not know that the chemical reason, upon which this necessity is founded, has been yet sufficiently explored. It seems to be made appear, that the atmosphere which we breathe is a mixture of two kinds of air; one pure and vital, the other, for the purposes of life, effete, foul, and noxious: that when we have drawn in our breath, the blood in the lungs imbibes from the air, thus brought into contiguity with it, a portion of its pure ingredient, and, at the same time, gives out the effete or corrupt air which it contained, and which is carried away, along with the halitus, every time we expire. At least; by comparing the air which is breathed from the lungs, with the air which enters the lungs, it is found to have lost some of its pure part, and to have brought away with it an addition of its impure part. Whether these experiments satisfy the question, as to the need which the blood stands in of being visited by continual accesses of air, is not for us to inquire into, nor material to our argument: it is sufficient to know, that, in the constitution of most animals, such a necessity exists, and that the air, by some means, or other, *must* be introduced into a near communication with the blood. The lungs of animals are constructed for this purpose. They consist of blood-vessels, and air-vessels, lying close to each other; and wherever there is a branch of the trachea or windpipe, there is a branch accompanying it, of the vein and artery, and the air-vessel is always in the middle between the blood-vessels * The internal surface of these vessels, upon which the application of the air to the blood depends, would, if collected and expanded, be, in a man, equal to superficies of fifteen feet square. Now, in order to give the blood in its course the benefit of this organization, (and this is the part of the subject with which we are chiefly concerned,) the following operation takes place. As soon as the blood is received by the heart from the veins of the body, and *before* that is sent out again into its arteries, it is carried, by the force of the contraction of the heart, and by means of a separate and supplementary artery, to the lungs; and made to enter the vessels of the lungs; from which, after it has undergone the action, whatever it be, of that viscus, it is brought back by a large vein once more to the heart, in order, when thus concocted and prepared, to be thence distributed anew into the system. This assigns to the heart a double office. The pulmonary circulation is a system within a system; and one action of the heart is the origin of both.

For this complicated function, four cavities become necessary; and four are accordingly provided: two, called ventricles, which *send out* the blood, *viz.* one into the lungs, in the first instance; the other into the mass, after it has returned from the lungs: two others also, called auricles, which *receive* the blood from the veins; *viz.* one, as it comes immediately from the body; the other as the same blood comes a second time after its circulation through the lungs. So that there are two receiving cavities, and two forcing cavities. The structure of the heart has reference to the lungs; for without the lungs, one of each would have been sufficient. The translation of the blood in the heart itself is after this manner. The receiving cavities respectively communicate with the forcing cavities, and, by their contraction, unload the received blood into them. The forcing cavities, when it is their turn to contract, compel the same blood into the mouths of the arteries.

The account here given will not convey to a reader, ignorant of anatomy, any thing like an accurate notion of the form, action, or use, of the parts, (nor can any short and popular account do this;) but it is abundantly sufficient to testify contrivance; and although imperfect, being true as far as it goes, may be relied upon for the only purpose for which we offer it, the purpose of this conclusion.

"The wisdom of the Creator," saith Hamburgher, "is in nothing seen more gloriously than in the heart." And how well doth it execute its office! An anatomist, who understood the structure of the heart, might say beforehand that it would play; but he would expect, I think, from the complexity of its mechanism, and the delicacy of many of its parts, that it should always be liable to derangement, or that it would soon work itself out. Yet shall this wonderful machine go, night and day, for eighty years together, at the rate of a hundred thousand strokes every twenty-four hours, having, at every stroke, a great resistance to overcome; and shall continue this action for this length of time, without disorder and without weariness!

But farther: From the account which has been given of the mechanism of the heart, it is evident that it must require the interposition of *valves;* that the success indeed of its action must depend upon these; for when any one of its cavities contracts, the necessary tendency of the force will be to drive the enclosed blood, not only into the mouth of the artery where it ought to go, but also back again into the mouth of the vein from which it flowed. In like manner, when by the relaxation of the fibres the same cavity is dilated, the blood would not only run into it from the vein, which was the course intended, but back from the artery, through which it ought to be moving forward. The way of preventing a reflux of the fluid, in both these cases, is to fix valves, which, like floodgates, may open a way to the stream in one direction, and shut up the passage against it in another. The heart, constituted as it is, can no more work without valves, than a pump can. When the piston descends in a pump, if it were not for the stoppage by the valve beneath, the motion would only thrust down the water which it had before drawn up. A similar consequence would frustrate the action of the heart. Valves, therefore, properly disposed, *i. e.* properly with respect to the course of the blood which it is necessary to promote, are essential to the contrivance. *And valves so disposed, are accordingly provided.* A valve is placed in the communication between each auricle and its ventricle, lest, when the ventricle contracts, part of the blood should get back again in to the auricle, instead of the whole entering, as it ought to do, the mouth of the artery. A valve is also fixed at the mouth of each of the great arteries which take the blood from the heart; leaving the passage free, so long as the blood holds its proper course forward; closing it, whenever the blood, in consequence of the relaxation of the ventricle, would attempt to flow back. There is some variety in the construction of these valves, though all the valves of the body act nearly upon the same

* Keill's Anatomy, p. 121.

principle, and are destined to the same use. In general they consist of a thin membrane, lying close to the side of the vessel, and consequently allowing an open passage whilst the stream runs one way, but thrust out from the side by the fluid getting behind it, and opposing the passage of the blood, when it would flow the other way. Where more than one membrane is employed, the different membranes only compose one valve. Their joint action fulfils the office of a valve: for instance; over the entrance of the right auricle of the heart into the right ventricle, three of these skins or membranes are fixed, of a triangular figure, the bases of the triangles fastened to the flesh; the sides and summits loose; but, though loose, connected by threads of a determinate length, with certain small fleshy prominences adjoining. The effect of this construction is, that when the ventricle contracts, the blood endeavouring to escape in all directions, and amongst other directions, pressing upwards, gets *between* these membranes and the sides of the passage; and thereby forces them up into such a position, as that, together, they constitute, when raised, a hollow cone, (the strings, before spoken of, hindering them from proceeding or separating farther;) which cone, entirely occupying the passage, prevents the return of the blood into the auricle. A shorter account of the matter may be this: so long as the blood proceeds in its proper course, the membranes which compose the valve are pressed close to the side of the vessel, and occasion no impediment to the circulation: when the blood would regurgitate, they are raised from the side of the vessel, and, meeting in the middle of its cavity, shut up the channel. Can any one doubt of contrivance here: or is it possible to shut our eyes against the proof of it?

This valve, also, is not more curious in its structure, than it is important in its office. Upon the play of the valve, even upon the proportioned length of the strings or fibres which check the ascent of the membranes, depends, as it should seem, nothing less than the life itself of the animal. We may here likewise repeat, what we before observed concerning some of the ligaments of the body, that they could not be formed by any action of the parts themselves. There are cases in which, although good uses appear to arise from the shape or configuration of a part, yet that shape or configuration itself may seem to be produced by the action of the part, or by the action or pressure of adjoining parts. Thus the bend and the internal smooth concavity of the ribs, may be attributed to the equal pressure of the soft bowels; the particular shape of some bones and joints, to the traction of the annexed muscles, or to the position of contiguous muscles. But valves could not be so formed. Action and pressure are all against them. The blood, in its proper course, has no tendency to produce such things; and in its improper or reflected current, has a tendency to prevent their production. Whilst we see, therefore, the use and necessity of this machinery, we can look to no other account of its origin or formation than the intending mind of a Creator. Nor can we without admiration reflect, that such thin membranes, such weak and tender instruments as these valves are, should be able to hold out for seventy or eighty years.

Here also we cannot consider but with gratitude, how happy it is that our vital motions are *involuntary*. We should have enough to do, if we had to keep our hearts beating, and our stomachs at work. Did these things depend, we will not say upon our effort, but upon our bidding, our care, or our attention, they would leave us leisure for nothing else. We must have been continually upon the watch, and continually in fear; nor would this constitution have allowed of sleep.

It might perhaps be expected, that an organ so precious, of such central and primary importance as the heart is, should be defended by *a case*. The fact is, that a membranous purse or bag, made of strong, tough materials, is provided for it; holding the heart within its cavity; sitting loosely and easily about it; guarding its substance, without confining its motion; and containing likewise a spoonful or two of water, just sufficient to keep the surface of the heart in a state of suppleness and moisture. How should such a loose covering be generated by the action of the heart? Does not the enclosing of it in a sack, answering no other purpose but that enclosure, show the care that has been taken of its preservation?

One use of the circulation of the blood probably (amongst other uses) is, to distribute nourishment to the different parts of the body. How minute and multiplied the ramifications of the blood-vessels, for that purpose, are; and how thickly spread, over at least the superficies of the body, is proved by the single observation, that we cannot prick the point of a pin into the flesh, without drawing blood, *i. e.* without finding a blood-vessel. Nor, internally, is their diffusion less universal. Blood-vessels run along the surface of membranes, pervade the substance of muscles, penetrate the bones. Even into every tooth, we trace, through a small hole in the root, an artery to feed the bone, as well as a vein to bring back the spare blood from it; both which, with the addition of an accompanying nerve, form a thread only a little thicker than a horse-hair.

Wherefore, when the nourishment taken in at the mouth has once reached, and mixed itself with the blood, every part of the body is in the way of being supplied with it. And this introduces another grand topic, namely, the manner in which the aliment gets into the *blood;* which is a subject distinct from the preceding, and brings us to the consideration of another entire system of vessels.

II. For this necessary part of the animal economy, an apparatus is provided, in a great measure capable of being what anatomists call demonstrated, that is, shown in the dead body;—and a line or course of conveyance, which we can pursue by our examinations.

First, the food descends by a wide passage into the intestines, undergoing two great preparations on its way: one, in the mouth by mastication and moisture—(can it be doubted with what design the teeth were placed in the road to the stomach, or that there was choice in fixing them in this situation?) the other, by digestion in the stomach itself. Of this last surprising dissolution I say nothing; because it is chymistry, and I am endeavouring to display mechanism. The figure and position of the stomach (I speak all along with a reference to the human organ) are calculated for detaining the food long enough for the action of its digestive juice. It has the shape of the pouch of a bagpipe; lies across the body; and the pylorus, or passage by which the food leaves it, is somewhat higher in the body than the cardia, or orifice by which it enters so that it is by the contraction

of the muscular coat of the stomach, that the contents, after having undergone the application of the gastric menstruum, are gradually pressed out. In dogs and cats, this action of the coats of the stomach has been displayed to the eye. It is a slow and gentle undulation, propagated from one orifice of the stomach to the other. For the same reason that I omitted, for the present, offering any observation upon the digestive fluid, I shall say nothing concerning the bile or the pancreatic juice, farther than to observe upon the mechanism, *viz.* that from the glands in which these secretions are elaborated, pipes are laid into the first of the intestines, through which pipes the product of each gland flows into that bowel, and is there mixed with the aliment, as soon almost as it passes the stomach; adding also as a remark, how grievously this same bile offends the stomach itself, yet cherishes the vessel that lies next to it.

Secondly, We have now the aliment in the intestines, converted into pulp; and, though lately consisting of ten different viands, reduced to nearly a uniform substance, and to a state fitted for yielding its essence, which is called chyle, but which is milk, or more nearly resembling milk than any other liquor with which it can be compared. For the straining of this fluid from the digested aliment in the course of its long progress through the body, myriads of capillary tubes, *i. e.* pipes as small as hairs, open their orifices into the cavity of every part of the intestines. These tubes, which are so fine and slender as not to be visible unless when distended with chyle, soon unite into larger branches. The pipes, formed by this union, terminate in glands, from which other pipes of a still larger diameter arising, carry the chyle from all parts, into a common reservoir or *receptacle*. This receptacle is a bag of size enough to hold about two table-spoons full; and from this vessel a duct or main pipe proceeds, climbing up the back part of the chest, and afterward creeping along the gullet till it reach the neck. Here it meets the river: here it discharges itself into a large vein, which soon conveys the chyle, now flowing along with the old blood, to the heart. This whole route can be exhibited to the eye; nothing is left to be supplied by imagination or conjecture. Now, beside the subserviency of this structure, collectively considered, to a manifest and necessary purpose, we may remark two or three separate particulars in it, which show, not only the contrivance, but the perfection of it. We may remark, first, the length of the intestines, which, in the human subject, is six times that of the body. Simply for a passage, these voluminous bowels, this prolixity of gut, seems in no wise necessary; but in order to allow time and space for the successive extraction of the chyle from the digested aliment, namely, that the chyle which escapes the lacteals of one part of the guts may be taken up by those of some other part, the length of the canal is of evident use and conduciveness. Secondly, we must also remark their peristaltic motion; which is made up of contractions, following one another like waves upon the surface of a fluid, and not unlike what we observe in the body of an earth-worm crawling along the ground; and which is effected by the joint action of longitudinal and of spiral, or rather perhaps of a great number of separate semicircular fibres. This curious action pushes forward the grosser part of the aliment, at the same time that the more subtile parts, which we call chyle, are, by a series of gentle compressions, squeezed into the narrow orifices of the lacteal veins. Thirdly, it was necessary that these tubes, which we denominate lacteals, or their mouths at least, should be made as narrow as possible, in order to deny admission into the blood to any particle which is of size enough to make a lodgment afterward in the small arteries, and thereby to obstruct the circulation: and it was also necessary that this extreme tenuity should be compensated by multitude; for a large quantity of chyle (in ordinary constitutions, not less, it has been computed, than two or three quarts in a day) is, by some means or other, to be passed through them. Accordingly, we find the number of the lacteals exceeding all powers of computation; and their pipes so fine and slender, as not to be visible, unless filled, to the naked eye; and their orifices, which open into the intestines, so small, as not to be discernible even by the best microscope. Fourthly, the main pipe which carries the chyle from the reservoir to the blood, *viz.* the thoracic duct, being fixed in an almost upright position, and wanting that advantage of propulsion which the arteries possess, is furnished with a succession of valves to check the ascending fluid, when once it has passed them, from falling back. These valves look upward, so as to leave the ascent free, but to prevent the return of the chyle, if, for want of sufficient force to push it on, its weight should at any time cause it to descend. Fifthly, the chyle enters the blood in an odd place, but perhaps the most commodious place possible, *viz.* at a large vein in the neck, so situated with respect to the circulation, as speedily to bring the mixture to the heart. And this seems to be a circumstance of great moment; for had the chyle entered the blood at an artery, or at a distant vein, the fluid, composed of the old and the new materials, must have performed a considerable part of the circulation, before it received that churning in the lungs, which is, probably, necessary for the intimate and perfect union of the old blood with the recent chyle. Who could have dreamt of a communication between the cavity of the intestines and the left great vein of the *neck?* Who could have suspected that this communication should be the medium through which all nourishment is derived to the body; or this the place, where, by a side-inlet, the important junction is formed between the blood and the material which feeds it?

We postponed the consideration of *digestion*, lest it should interrupt us in tracing the course of the food to the blood; but in treating of the alimentary system, so principal a part of the process cannot be omitted.

Of the gastric juice, the immediate agent by which that change which food undergoes in our stomachs is effected, we shall take our account from the numerous, careful, and varied experiments of the Abbé Spallanzani.

1. It is not a simple diluent, but a real solvent. A quarter of an ounce of beef had scarcely touched the stomach of a crow, when the solution begun.

2. It has not the nature of saliva; it has not the nature of the bile; but is distinct from both. By experiments out of the body it appears, that neither of these secretions acts upon alimentary substances, in the same manner as the gastric juice acts.

3. Digestion is not *putrefaction:* for the digest-

ing fluid resists putrefaction most pertinaciously; nay, not only checks its farther progress, but restores putrid substances.

4. It is not a *fermentative* process: for the solution begins at the surface, and proceeds towards the centre, contrary to the order in which fermentation acts and spreads.

5. It is not the *digestion of heat:* for the cold maw of a cod or sturgeon will dissolve the shells of crabs or lobsters, harder than the sides of the stomach which contains them.

In a word, animal digestion carries about it the marks of being a power and a process completely *sui generis;* distinct from every other; at least from every chymical process with which we are acquainted. And the most wonderful thing about it is its appropriation; its subserviency to the particular economy of each animal. The gastric juice of an owl, falcon, or kite, will not touch grain; no, not even to finish the macerated and half-digested pulse which is left in the crops of the sparrows that the bird devours. In poultry, the trituration of the gizzard, and the gastric juice, conspire in the work of digestion. The gastric juice will not dissolve the grain whilst it is whole. Entire grains of barley, enclosed in tubes or spherules, are not affected by it. But if the same grain be by any means broken or ground, the gastric juice immediately lays hold of it. Here then is wanted, and here we find, a combination of mechanism and chymistry. For the preparatory grinding, the gizzard lends its mill. And as all mill-works should be strong, its structure is so, beyond that of any other muscle belonging to the animal. The internal coat also, or lining of the gizzard, is, for the same purpose, hard and cartilaginous. But, forasmuch as this is not the sort of animal substance, suited for the reception of glands or for secretion, the gastric juice, in this family, is not supplied, as in membranous stomachs, by the stomach itself, but by the gullet, in which the feeding glands are placed, and from which it trickles down into the stomach.

In sheep, the gastric fluid has no effect in digesting plants, *unless they have been previously masticated.* It only produces a slight maceration, nearly such as common water would produce, in a degree of heat somewhat exceeding the medium temperature of the atmosphere. But provided that the plant has been reduced to pieces by chewing, the gastric juice then proceeds with it, first by softening its substance; next by destroying its natural consistency; and lastly, by dissolving it so completely, as not even to spare the toughest and most stringy parts, such as the nerves of the leaves.

So far our accurate and indefatigable Abbé.— Dr. Stevens, of Edinburgh, in 1777, found, by experiments tried with perforated balls, that the gastric juice of the sheep and the ox speedily dissolved vegetables, but made no impression upon beef, mutton, and other animal bodies. Dr. Hunter discovered a property of this fluid, of a most curious kind; *viz.* that in the stomachs of animals which feed upon flesh, irresistibly as this fluid acts upon animal substances, it is only upon the *dead* substance that it operates at all. The *living* fibre suffers no injury from lying in contact with it. Worms and insects are found alive in the stomachs of such animals. The coats of the human stomach, in a healthy state, are insensible to its presence; yet in cases of sudden death, (wherein the gastric juice, not having been weakened by disease, retains its activity,) it has been known to eat a hole through the bowel which contains it.* How nice is this discrimination of action, yet how necessary!

But to return to our hydraulics.

III. The gall-bladder is a very remarkable contrivance. It is the reservoir of a canal. It does not form the channel itself, *i. e.* the direct communication between the liver and the intestine, which is by another passage, *viz.* the ductus hepaticus, continued under the name of the ductus communis; but it lies adjacent to this channel, joining it by a duct of its own, the ductus cysticus: by which structure it is enabled, as occasion may require, to add its contents to, and increase the flow of bile into the duodenum. And the position of the gall-bladder is such as to apply this structure to the best advantage. In its natural situation, it touches the exterior surface of the stomach, and consequently is compressed by the distention of that vessel: the effect of which compression is to force out from the bag, and send into the duodenum, an extraordinary quantity of bile, to meet the extraordinary demand which the repletion of the stomach by food is about to occasion.† Cheselden describes‡ the gall-bladder as seated against the duodenum, and thereby liable to have its fluid pressed out, by the passage of the aliment through that cavity; which likewise will have the effect of causing it to be received into the intestine, at a right time, and in a due proportion.

There may be other purposes answered by this contrivance; and it is probable that there are. The contents of the gall-bladder are not exactly of the same kind as what passes from the liver through a direct passage.§ It is possible that the gall may be changed, and for some purposes meliorated, by keeping.

The entrance of the gall-duct into the duodenum furnishes another observation. Whenever either smaller tubes are inserted into larger tubes, or tubes into vessels and cavities, such receiving tubes, vessels, or cavities, being subject to muscular constriction, we always find a contrivance to prevent *regurgitation.* In some cases, valves are used; in other cases, amongst which is that now before us, a different expedient is resorted to, which may be thus described: The gall-duct enters the duodenum obliquely: after it has pierced the first coat, it runs near two fingers' breadth *between* the coats, before it opens into the cavity of the intestine.‖ The same contrivance is used in another part, where there is exactly the same occasion for it, *viz.* in the insertion of the ureters in the bladder. These enter the bladder near its neck, running obliquely for the space of an inch between its coats.¶ It is, in both cases, sufficiently evident, that this structure has a necessary mechanical tendency to resist regurgitation: for whatever force acts in such a direction as to urge the fluid back into the orifices of the tubes, must, at the same time, stretch the coats of the vessels, and thereby compress that part of the tube which is included between them.

IV. Amongst the *vessels* of the human body the pipe which conveys the saliva from the place where it is made, to the place where it is wanted,

* Phil. Trans. vol. lxii. p. 447. † Keill's Anat. p. 64.
‡ Anat. p. 164. § Keill, (from Malpighius,) p. 63
‖ Keill's Anat. p. 62. ¶ Cheselden's Anat. p. 269.

deserves to be reckoned amongst the most intelligible pieces of mechanism with which we are acquainted. The saliva, we all know, is used in the mouth: but much of it is produced on the outside of the cheek, by the parotid gland, which lies between the ear and the angle of the lower jaw. In order to carry the secreted juice to its destination, there is laid from the gland, on the outside, a pipe, about the thickness of a wheat straw, and about three fingers' breadth in length; which, after riding over the masseter muscle, bores for itself a hole through the very middle of the cheek; enters by that hole, which is a complete perforation of the buccinator muscle, into the mouth; and there discharges its fluid very copiously.

V. Another exquisite structure, differing indeed from the four preceding instances, in that it does not relate to the conveyance of fluids, but still belonging, like these, to the class of pipes or conduits of the body, is seen in the *larnyx*. We all know that there go down the throat two pipes, one leading to the stomach, the other to the lungs; the one being the passage for the food, the other for the breath and voice: we know also that both these passages open into the bottom of the mouth; the gullet, necessarily, for the conveyance of food; and the wind-pipe, for speech and the modulation of sound, not much less so: therefore the difficulty was, the passages being so contiguous, to prevent the food, especially the liquids, which we swallow into the stomach, from entering the wind-pipe, *i. e.* the road to the lungs; the consequence of which error, when it does happen, is perceived by the convulsive throes that are instantly produced. This business, which is very nice, is managed in this manner. The gullet (the passage for food) opens into the mouth like the cone or upper part of a funnel, the capacity of which forms indeed the bottom of the mouth. Into the side of this funnel, at the part which lies the lowest, enters the wind-pipe, by a chink or slit, with a lid or flap, like a little tongue, accurately fitted to the orifice. The solids or liquids which we swallow, pass over this lid or flap, as they descend by the funnel into the gullet. Both the weight of the food, and the action of the muscles concerned in swallowing, contribute to keep the lid close down upon the aperture, whilst any thing is passing; whereas, by means of its natural cartilaginous spring, it raises itself a little, as soon as the food is passed, thereby allowing a free inlet and outlet for the respiration of air by the lungs. Such is its structure: and we may here remark the almost complete success of the expedient, *viz.* how seldom it fails of its purpose, compared with the number of instances in which it fulfils it. Reflect how frequently we swallow, how constantly we breathe. In a city feast, for example, what deglutition, what anhelation! yet does this little cartilage, the epiglottis, so effectually interpose its office, so securely guard the entrance of the wind-pipe, that whilst morsel after morsel, draught after draught, are coursing one another over it, an accident of a crumb or a drop slipping into this passage (which nevertheless must be opened for the breath every second of time,) excites in the whole company, not only alarm by its danger, but surprise by its novelty. Not two guests are choked in a century.

There is no room for pretending that the action of the parts may have gradually formed the epiglottis: I do not mean in the same individual, but in a succession of generations. Not only the action of the parts has no such tendency, but the animal could not live, nor consequently the parts act, either without it, or with it in a half-formed state. The species was not to wait for the gradual formation or expansion of a part which was, from the first, necessary to the life of the individual.

Not only is the larynx curious, but the whole wind-pipe possesses a structure adapted to its peculiar office. It is made up (as any one may perceive by putting his fingers to his throat) of stout cartilaginous ringlets, placed at small and equal distances from one another. Now this is not the case with any other of the numerous conduits of the body. The use of these cartilages is to keep the passage for the air *constantly* open; which they do mechanically. A pipe with soft membranous coats, liable to collapse and close when empty, would not have answered here; although this be the general vascular structure, and a structure which serves very well for those tubes which are kept in a state of perpetual distension by the fluid they enclose, or which afford a passage to solid and protruding substances.

Nevertheless (which is another particularity well worthy of notice,) these rings are not complete, that is, are not cartilaginous and stiff all round; but their hinder part, which is contiguous to the gullet, is membranous and soft, easily yielding to the distensions of that organ occasioned by the descent of solid food. The same rings are also bevelled off at the upper and lower edges, the better to close upon one another, when the trachea is compressed or shortened.

The constitution of the trachea may suggest likewise another reflection. The membrane which lines its inside, is, perhaps, the most sensible, irritable membrane of the body. It rejects the touch of a crumb of bread, or a drop of water, with a spasm which convulses the whole frame; yet, left to itself, and its proper office, the intromission of air alone, nothing can be so quiet. It does not even make itself felt; a man does not know that he has a trachea. This capacity of perceiving with such acuteness, this impatience of offence, yet perfect rest and ease when let alone, are properties, one would have thought, not likely to reside in the same subject. It is to the junction, however, of these almost inconsistent qualities, in this, as well as in some other delicate parts of the body, that we owe our safety and our comfort;—our safety to their sensibility, our comfort to their repose.

The larynx, or rather the whole wind-pipe taken together, (for the larynx is only the upper part of the wind-pipe,) besides its other uses, is also a musical instrument, that is to say, it is *mechanism* expressly adapted to the modulation of sound; for it has been found upon trial, that, by relaxing or tightening the tendinous bands at the extremity of the wind-pipe, and blowing in at the other end, all the cries and notes might be produced of which the living animal was capable. It can be sounded, just as a pipe or flute is sounded.

Birds, says Bonnet, have, at the lower end of the wind-pipe, a conformation like the reed of a hautboy, for the modulation of their notes. A tuneful bird is a ventriloquist. The seat of the song is in the breast.

The use of the lungs *in* the system has been said to be obscure; one use however is plain, though in some sense external to the system, and that is, the formation, in conjunction with the larynx, of voice and speech. They are, to animal utterance, what the bellows are to the organ.

For the sake of method, we have considered animal bodies under three divisions; their bones, their muscles, and their vessels: and we have stated our observations upon these parts separately. But this is to diminish the strength of the argument. The wisdom of the Creator is seen, not in their separate but their collective action; in their mutual subserviency and dependance; in their contributing *together* to one effect, and one use. It has been said, that a man cannot lift his hand to his head, without finding enough to convince him of the existence of a God. And it is well said; for he has only to reflect, familiar as this action is, and simple as it seems to be, how many things are requisite for the performing of it: how many things which we understand, to say nothing of many more, probably, which we do not; *viz.* first, a long, hard, strong cylinder, in order to give to the arm its firmness and tension; but which, being rigid, and, in its substance, inflexible, can only turn upon joints: secondly, therefore, joints for this purpose; one at the shoulder to raise the arm, another at the elbow to bend it; these joints continually fed with a soft mucilage to make the parts slip easily upon one another, and holden together by strong braces, to keep them in their position: then, thirdly, strings and wires, *i. e.* muscles and tendons, artificially inserted for the purpose of drawing the bones in the directions in which the joints allow them to move. Hitherto we seem to understand the mechanism pretty well; and, understanding this, we possess enough for our conclusion: nevertheless, we have hitherto only a machine standing still; a dead organization, —an apparatus. To put the system in a state of activity; to set it at work; a farther provision is necessary, *viz.* a communication with the brain by means of nerves. We know the existence of this communication, because we can see the communicating threads, and can trace them to the brain: its necessity we also know, because if the thread be cut, if the communication be intercepted, the muscle becomes paralytic: but beyond this we know little; the organization being too minute and subtile for our inspection.

To what has been enumerated, as officiating in the single act of a man's raising his hand to his head, must be added likewise, all that is necessary, and all that contributes to the growth, nourishment, and sustentation, of the limb, the repair of its waste, the preservation of its health: such as the circulation of the blood through every part of it; its lymphatics, exhalants, absorbents; its excretions and integuments. All these share in the result; join in the effect: and how all these, or any of them, come together without a designing, disposing intelligence, it is impossible to conceive.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the Animal Structure regarded as a Mass.

Contemplating *an animal body* in its collective capacity, we cannot forget to notice what a number of instruments are brought together, and often within how small a compass. It is a cluster of contrivances. In a canary-bird, for instance, and in the single ounce of matter which composes his body, (but which seems to be all employed,) we have instruments for eating, for digesting, for nourishment, for breathing, for generation, for running, for flying, for seeing, for hearing, for smelling; each appropriate,—each entirely different from all the rest.

The human, or indeed the animal frame, considered as a mass or assemblage, exhibits in its composition three properties, which have long struck my mind as indubitable evidences, not only of design, but of a great deal of attention and accuracy in prosecuting the design.

1. The first is, the exact correspondency of the two sides of the same animal: the right hand answering to the left, leg to leg, eye to eye, one side of the countenance to the other; and with a precision, to imitate which in any tolerable degree forms one of the difficulties of statuary, and requires on the part of the artist, a constant attention to this property of his work, distinct from every other.

It is the most difficult thing that can be to get a wig made even; yet how seldom is the *face* awry! And what care is taken that it should not be so, the anatomy of its bones demonstrates. The upper part of the face is composed of thirteen bones, six on each side, answering each to each, and the thirteenth, without a fellow, in the middle; the lower part of the face is in like manner composed of six bones, three on each side respectively corresponding, and the lower jaw in the centre. In building an arch, could more be done in order to make the curve *true*, *i. e.* the parts equi-distant from the middle, alike in figure and position?

The exact resemblance of the *eyes*, considering how compounded this organ is in its structure, how various and how delicate are the shades of colour with which its iris is tinged; how differently, as to effect upon appearance, the eye may be mounted in its socket, and how differently in different heads eyes actually are set,—is a property of animal bodies much to be admired. Of ten thousand eyes, I do not know that it would be possible to match one, except with its own fellow; or to distribute them into suitable pairs by any other selection than that which obtains.

This regularity of the animal structure is rendered more remarkable by the three following considerations. First, the limbs, *separately* taken, have not this correlation of parts, but the contrary of it. A knife drawn down the chine, cuts the human body into two parts, externally equal and alike; you cannot draw a straight line which will divide a hand, a foot, the leg, the thigh, the cheek, the eye, the ear, into two parts equal and alike. Those parts which are placed upon the middle or partition line of the body, or which traverse that line, as the nose, the tongue, the lips, may be so divided, or, more properly speaking, are double organs: but other parts cannot. This shows that the correspondency which we have been describing, does not arise by any necessity in the nature of the subject: for, if necessary, it would be universal; whereas it is observed only in the system or assemblage: it is not true of the separate parts; that is to say, it is found where it conduces to beauty or utility; it is not found, where it would subsist at the expense of both. The two wings of a bird always correspond: the two sides of a feather frequently do not. In centi-

pedes, millepedes, and the whole tribe of insects, no two legs on the same side are alike: yet there is the most exact parity between the legs opposite to one another.

2. The next circumstance to be remarked is, that, whilst the cavities of the body are so configurated, as *externally* to exhibit the most exact correspondency of the opposite sides, the contents of these cavities have no such correspondency. A line drawn down the middle of the breast, divides the thorax into two sides exactly similar; yet these two sides enclose very different contents. The heart lies on the left side; a lobe of the lungs on the right; balancing each other, neither in size nor shape. The same thing holds of the abdomen. The liver lies on the right side, without any similar viscus opposed to it on the left. The spleen indeed is situated over against the liver; but agreeing with the liver neither in bulk nor form. There is no equipollency between these. The stomach is a vessel, both irregular in its shape, and oblique in its position. The foldings and doublings of the intestines do not present a parity of sides. Yet that symmetry which depends upon the correlation of the sides, is externally preserved throughout the whole trunk; and is the more remarkable in the lower parts of it, as the integuments are soft; and the shape, consequently, is not, as the thorax is by its ribs, reduced by natural stays. It is evident, therefore, that the external proportion does not arise from any equality in the shape or pressure of the internal contents. What is it indeed but a correction of inequalities? an adjustment, by mutual compensation, of anomalous forms into a regular congeries? the effect, in a word, of artful, and, if we might be permitted so to speak, of studied collocation?

3. Similar also to this, is the third observation; that an internal inequality in the feeding vessels is so managed, as to produce no inequality in parts which were intended to correspond. The right arm answers accurately to the left, both in size and shape; but the arterial branches, which supply the two arms, do not go off from their trunk, in a pair, in the same manner, at the same place, or at the same angle. Under which want of similitude, it is very difficult to conceive how the same quantity of blood should be pushed through each artery: yet the result is right; the two limbs, which are nourished by them, perceive no difference of supply, no effects of excess or deficiency.

Concerning the difference of manner, in which the subclavian and carotid arteries, upon the different sides of the body, separate themselves from the aörta, Cheselden seems to have thought, that the advantage which the left gain by going off at an angle much more acute than the right, is made up to the right, by their going off together in one branch.* It is very possible that this may be the compensating contrivance; and if it be so, how curious, how hydrostatical!

II. Another perfection of the animal mass is the *package*. I know nothing which is so surprising. Examine the contents of the trunk of any large animal. Take notice how soft, how tender, how intricate they are; how constantly in action, how necessary to life! Reflect upon the danger of any injury to their substance, any derangement of their position, any obstruction to their office. Observe the heart pumping at the centre at the rate of eighty strokes in a minute; one set of pipes carrying the stream away from it, another set bringing, in its course, the fluid back to it again; the lungs performing their elaborate office, *viz.* distending and contracting their many thousand vesicles, by a reciprocation which cannot cease for a minute; the stomach exercising its powerful chymistry; the bowels silently propelling the changed aliment; collecting from it as it proceeds, and transmitting to the blood, an incessant supply of prepared and assimilated nourishment; that blood pursuing its course; the liver, the kidneys, the pancreas, the parotid, with many other known and distinguishable glands, drawing off from it, all the while, their proper secretions. These several operations, together with others more subtile but less capable of being investigated, are going on within us, at one and the same time. Think of this; and then observe how the body itself, the case which holds this machinery, is rolled, and jolted, and tossed about, the mechanism remaining unhurt, and with very little molestation even of its nicest motions. Observe a ropedancer, a tumbler, or a monkey; the sudden inversions and contortions which the internal parts sustain by the postures into which their bodies are thrown; or rather observe the shocks which these parts, even in ordinary subjects, sometimes receive from falls and bruises, or by abrupt jerks and twists, without sensible, or with soon-recovered, damage. Observe this, and then reflect how firmly every part must be secured, how carefully surrounded, how well tied down and packed together.

This property of animal bodies has never, I think, been considered under a distinct head, or so fully as it deserves. I may be allowed therefore, in order to verify my observation concerning it, to set forth a short anatomical detail, though it oblige me to use more technical language than I should wish to introduce into a work of this kind.

1. The *heart* (such care is taken of the centre of life) is placed between two soft lobes of the lungs: is *tied* to the mediastinum and to the pericardium; which pericardium is not only itself an exceedingly strong membrane, but *adheres* firmly to the duplicature of the mediastinum, and, by its point, to the middle tendon of the diaphragm. The heart is also *sustained* in its place by the great blood-vessels which issue from it.*

2. The *lungs* are *tied* to the sternum by the mediastinum, before; to the vertebræ by the pleura, behind. It seems indeed to be the very use of the mediastinum (which is a membrane that goes straight through the middle of the thorax, from the breast to the back) to keep the contents of the thorax in their places; in particular to hinder one lobe of the lungs from incommoding another, or the parts of the lungs from pressing upon each other when we lie on one side.†

3. The *liver* is fastened in the body by two ligaments: the first, which is large and strong, comes from the covering of the diaphragm, and penetrates the substance of the liver; the second is the umbilical vein, which, after birth, degenerates into a ligament. The first, which is the principal, fixes the liver in its situation, whilst the body holds an erect posture; the second prevents it from pressing upon the diaphragm when we lie down: and both together *sling* or suspend the liver when we lie upon our backs, so that it

* Ches. Anat. p. 184. ed. 7.

* Keill's Anat. p. 107. ed. 3. † Ibid. p. 119. ed. 3.

may not compress or obstruct the ascending vena cava,* to which belongs the important office of returning the blood from the body to the heart.

4. The *bladder* is tied to the naval by the urachus, transformed into a ligament: thus, what was a passage for urine to the fœtus, becomes, after birth, a support or stay to the bladder. The peritonæum also keeps the viscera from confounding themselves with, or pressing irregularly upon, the bladder; for the kidneys and bladder are contained in a distinct duplicature of that membrane, being thereby partitioned off from the other contents of the abdomen.

5. The *kidneys* are lodged in a bed of fat.

6. The *pancreas*, or sweetbread, is strongly tied to the peritonæum, which is the great wrapping-sheet, that encloses all the bowels contained in the lower belly.†

7. The *spleen* also is confined to its place by an adhesion to the peritonæum and diaphragm, and by a connexion with the omentum.‡ It is possible, in my opinion, that the spleen may be merely a *stuffing*, a soft cushion to fill up a vacancy or hollow, which, unless occupied, would leave the package loose and unsteady: for supposing that it answers no other purpose than this, it must be vascular, and admit of a circulation through it, in order to be kept alive, or be a part of a living body.

8. The *omentum*, epiplöon, or cawl, is an apron tucked up, or doubling upon itself, at its lowest part. The upper edge is tied to the bottom of the stomach, to the spleen, as hath already been observed, and to part of the duodenum. The reflected edge also, after forming the doubling, comes up behind the front flap, and is tied to the colon and adjoining viscera.§

9. The septa of the brain probably prevent one part of that organ from pressing with too great a weight upon another part. The processes of the dura mater divide the cavity of the skull, like so many inner partition walls, and thereby confine each hemisphere and lobe of the brain to the chamber which is assigned to it, without its being liable to rest upon, or intermix with, the neighbouring parts. The great art and caution of packing, is to prevent one thing hurting another. This, in the head, the chest, and the abdomen, of an animal body, is, amongst other methods, provided for by membranous partitions and wrappings, which keep the parts separate.

The above may serve as a short account of the manner in which the principal viscera are sustained in their places. But of the provisions for this purpose, by far, in my opinion, the most curious, and where also such a provision was most wanted, is in the *guts*. It is pretty evident, that a long narrow tube (in man, about five times the length of the body) laid from side to side in folds upon one another, winding in oblique and circuitous directions, composed also of a soft and yielding substance, must, without some extraordinary precaution for its safety, be continually displaced by the various, sudden, and abrupt motions of the body which contains it. I should expect that, if not bruised or wounded by every fall, or leap, or twist, it would be entangled, or be involved with itself; or, at the least, slipped and shaken out of the order in which it is disposed, and which order is necessary to be preserved, for the carrying on of the important functions which it has to execute in the animal economy. Let us see, therefore, how a danger so serious, and yet so natural to the length, narrowness, and tubular form, of the part, is provided against. The expedient is admirable: and it is this. The intestinal canal, throughout its whole process, is knit to the edge of a broad fat membrane called the mesentery. It forms the margin of this mesentery, being stitched and fastened to it like the edging of a ruffle: being four times as long as the mesentery itself, it is what a sempstress would call, "puckered or gathered on" to it. This is the nature of the connexion of the gut with the mesentery; and being thus joined to, or rather made a part of, the mesentery, it is folded and wrapped up together with it. Now the mesentery having a considerable dimension in breadth, being in its substance, withal, both thick and suety, is capable of a close and safe folding, in comparison of what the intestinal tube would admit of, if it had remained loose. The mesentery likewise not only keeps the intestinal canal in its proper place and position under all the turns and windings of its course, but sustains the numberless small vessels, the arteries, the veins, the lympheducts, and above all, the lacteals, which lead from or to almost every point of its coats and cavity. This membrane, which appears to be the great support and security of the alimentary apparatus, is itself strongly tied to the first three vertebræ of the loins.*

III. A third general property of animal forms is *beauty*. I do not mean relative beauty, or that of one individual above another of the same species, or of one species compared with another species; but I mean, generally, the provision which is made in the body of almost every animal, to adapt its appearance to the perception of the animals with which it converses. In our own species, for example, only consider what the parts and materials are, of which the fairest body is composed; and no farther observation will be necessary to show how well these things are wrapped up, so as to form a mass which shall be capable of symmetry in its proportion, and of beauty in its aspect; how the bones are covered, the bowels concealed, the roughnesses of the muscle smoothed and softened; and how over the whole is drawn an integument, which converts the disgusting materials of a dissecting-room into an object of attraction to the sight, or one upon which it rests, at least, with ease and satisfaction. Much of this effect is to be attributed to the intervention of the cellular or adipose membrane, which lies immediately under the skin; is a kind of lining to it; is moist, soft, slippery, and compressible; every where filling up the interstices of the muscles, and forming thereby their roundness and flowing line, as well as the evenness and polish of the whole surface.

All which seems to be a strong indication of design, and of a design studiously directed to this purpose. And it being once allowed, that such a purpose existed with respect to *any* of the productions of nature, we may refer, with a considerable degree of probability, other particulars to the same intention; such as the teints of flowers, the plumage of birds, the furs of beasts, the bright

* Ches. Anat. p. 162.
‡ Ches. Anat. p. 167.
† Keill's Anat. p. 57.
§ Ibid.

* Keill's Anat. p. 45.

scales of fishes, the painted wings of butterflies and beetles, the rich colours and spotted lustre of many tribes of insects.

There are parts also of animals ornamental, and the properties by which they are so, not subservient, that we know of, to any other purpose. The *irides* of most animals are very beautiful, without conducing at all, by their beauty, to the perfection of vision; and nature could in no part have employed her pencil to so much advantage, because no part presents itself so conspicuously to the observer, or communicates so great an effect to the whole aspect.

In plants, especially in the flowers of plants, the principle of beauty holds a still more considerable place in their composition; is still more confessed than in animals. Why, for one instance out of a thousand, does the corolla of the tulip, when advanced to its size and maturity, change its colour? The purposes, so far as we can see, of vegetable nutrition, might have been carried on as well by its continuing green. Or, if this could not be consistently with the progress of vegetable life, why break into such a variety of colours? This is no proper effect of age, or of declension in the ascent of the sap; for that, like the autumnal teints, would have produced one colour on one leaf, with marks of fading and withering. It seems a lame account to call it, as it has been called, a disease of the plant. Is it not more probable, that this property, which is independent, as it should seem, of the wants and utilities of the plant, was calculated for beauty, intended for display.

A ground, I know, of objection, has been taken against the whole topic of argument, namely, that there is no such thing as beauty at all; in other words, that whatever is useful and familiar, comes of course to be thought beautiful; and that things appear to be so, only by their alliance with these qualities. Our idea of beauty is capable of being in so great a degree modified by habit, by fashion, by the experience of advantage or pleasure, and by associations arising out of that experience, that a question has been made, whether it be not altogether generated by these causes, or would have any proper existence without them. It seems, however, a carrying of the conclusion too far, to deny the existence of the principle, *viz.* a native capacity of perceiving beauty, on account of an influence, or of varieties proceeding from that influence, to which it is subject, seeing that principles the most acknowledged are liable to be affected in the same manner. I should rather argue thus: The question respects objects of sight. Now every other sense hath its distinction of agreeable and disagreeable. Some tastes offend the palate, others gratify it. In brutes and insects, this distinction is stronger and more regular than in man. Every horse, ox, sheep, swine, when at liberty to choose, and when in a natural state, that is, when not vitiated by habits forced upon it, eats and rejects the same plants. Many insects which feed upon particular plants, will rather die than change their appropriated leaf. All this looks like a determination in the sense itself to particular tastes. In like manner, smells affect the nose with sensations pleasurable or disgusting. Some sounds, or compositions of sound, delight the ear; others torture it. Habit can do much in all these cases, (and it is well for us that it can; for it is this power which reconciles us to many necessities:) but has the distinction, in the mean time, of agreeable and disagreeable, no foundation in the sense itself? What is true of the other senses, is most probably true of the eye, (the analogy is irresistible,) *viz.* that there belongs to it an original constitution, fitted to receive pleasure from some impressions, and pain from others.

I do not however know, that the argument which alleges beauty as a final cause, rests upon this concession. We possess a sense of beauty, however we come by it. It in fact exists. Things are not indifferent to this sense; all objects do not suit it; many which we see, are agreeable to it; many others disagreeable. It is certainly not the effect of habit upon the particular object, because the most agreeable objects are often the most rare; many, which are very common, continue to be offensive. If they be made supportable by habit, it is all which habit can do; they never become agreeable. If this sense, therefore, be acquired, it is a result; the produce of numerous and complicated actions of external objects upon the senses, and of the mind upon its sensations. With this *result*, there must be a certain congruity to enable any particular object to please: and that congruity, we contend, is consulted in the *aspect* which is given to animal and vegetable bodies.

IV. The skin and covering of animals is that upon which their appearance chiefly depends; and it is that part which, perhaps, in all animals is most decorated, and most free from impurities. But were beauty, or agreeableness of aspect, entirely out of the question, there is another purpose answered by this integument, and by the collocation of the parts of the body beneath it, which is of still greater importance; and that purpose is *concealment*. Were it possible to view through the skin the mechanism of our bodies, the sight would frighten us out of our wits. "Durst we make a single movement," asks a lively French writer, "or stir a step from the place we were in, if we *saw* our blood circulating, the tendons pulling, the lungs blowing, the humours filtrating, and all the incomprehensible assemblage of fibres, tubes, pumps, valves, currents, pivots, which sustain an existence at once so frail, and so presumptuous?"

V. Of animal bodies, considered as masses, there is another property, more curious than it is generally thought to be; which is the faculty of *standing*: and it is more remarkable in two-legged animals than in quadrupeds, and, most of all, as being the tallest, and resting upon the smallest base, in man. There is more, I think, in the matter than we are aware of. The statue of a man, placed loosely upon its pedestal, would not be secure of standing half an hour. You are obliged to fix its feet to the block by bolts and solder; or the first shake, the first gust of wind, is sure to throw it down. Yet this statue shall express all the mechanical proportions of a living model. It is not, therefore, the mere figure, or merely placing the centre of gravity within the base, that is sufficient. Either the law of gravitation is suspended in favour of living substances, or something more is done for them, in order to enable them to uphold their posture. There is no reason whatever to doubt, but that their parts descend by gravitation in the same manner as those of dead matter. The gift, therefore, appears to me to consist in a faculty of perpetually shifting the centre of gravity, by a set of obscure, indeed, but of quick balancing actions, so as to keep the line of di-

rection, which is a line drawn from that centre to the ground, within its prescribed limits. Of these actions it may be observed, first, that they in part constitute what we call strength. The dead body drops down. The mere adjustment, therefore, of weight and pressure, which may be the same the moment after death as the moment before, does not support the column. In cases also of extreme weakness, the patient cannot stand upright. Secondly, that these actions are only in a small degree voluntary. A man is seldom conscious of his voluntary powers in keeping himself upon his legs. A child learning to walk is the greatest posture-maker in the world: but art, if it may be so called, sinks into habit; and he is soon able to poise himself in a great variety of attitudes, without being sensible either of caution or effort. But still there must be an aptitude of parts, upon which habit can thus attach; a previous capacity of motions which the animal is thus taught to exercise: and the facility with which this exercise is acquired, forms one object of our admiration. What parts are principally employed, or in what manner each contributes its office, is, as hath already been confessed, difficult to explain. Perhaps the obscure motion of the bones of the feet may have their share in this effect. They are put in action by every slip or vacillation of the body, and seem to assist in restoring its balance. Certain it is, that this circumstance in the structure of the foot, *viz.* its being composed of many small bones, applied to and articulating with one another, by diversely shaped surfaces, instead of being made of one piece, like the last of a shoe, is very remarkable. I suppose also that it would be difficult to stand firmly upon stilts or wooden legs, though their base exactly imitated the figure and dimensions of the sole of the foot. The alteration of the joints, the knee-joint bending backward, the hip-joint forward; the flexibility, in every direction, of the spine, especially in the loins and neck, appear to be of great moment in preserving the equilibrium of the body. With respect to this last circumstance, it is observable, that the vertebræ are so confined by ligaments as to allow no more slipping upon their bases, than what is just sufficient to break the shock which any violent motion may occasion to the body. A certain degree also of tension of the sinews appears to be essential to an erect posture; for it is by the loss of this, that the dead or paralytic body drops down. The whole is a wonderful result of combined powers, and of very complicated operations. Indeed, that *standing* is not so simple a business as we imagine it to be, is evident from the strange gesticulations of a drunken man, who has lost the government of the centre of gravity.

We have said that this property is the most worthy of observation in the *human* body: but a *bird*, resting upon its perch, or hopping upon a spray, affords no mean specimen of the same faculty. A chicken runs off as soon as it is hatched from the egg; yet a chicken, considered geometrically, and with relation to its centre of gravity, its line of direction, and its equilibrium, is a very irregular solid. Is this gift, therefore, or instruction? May it not be said to be with great attention, that nature hath balanced the body upon its pivots?

I observe also in the same *bird* a piece of useful mechanism of this kind. In the trussing of a fowl, upon bending the legs and thighs up towards the body, the cook finds that the claws close of their own accord. Now let it be remembered, that this is the position of the limbs, in which the bird rests upon its perch. And in this position it sleeps in safety; for the claws do their office in keeping hold of the support, not by any exertion of voluntary power, which sleep might suspend, but by the traction of the tendons in consequence of the attitude which the legs and thighs take by the bird sitting down, and to which the mere weight of the body gives the force that is necessary.

VI. Regarding the human body as a mass; regarding the general conformations which obtain in it; regarding also particular parts in respect to those conformations; we shall be led to observe what I call "interrupted analogies." The following are examples of what I mean by these terms; and I do not know how such critical deviations can, by any possible hypothesis, be accounted for without design.

1. All the bones of the body are covered with a *periosteum*, except the teeth; where it ceases, and an enamel of ivory which saws and files will hardly touch, comes into its place. No one can doubt of the use and propriety of this difference; of the "analogy" being thus "interrupted;" of the rule, which belongs to the conformation of the bones, stopping where it does stop: for had so exquisitely sensible a membrane as the periosteum invested the teeth, as it invests every other bone of the body, *their* action, necessary exposure, and irritation, would have subjected the animal to continual pain. General as it is, it was not the sort of integument which suited the teeth; what they stood in need of, was a strong, hard, insensible, defensive coat: and exactly such a covering is given to them, in the ivory enamel which adheres to their surface.

2. The scarf-skin, which clothes all the rest of the body, gives way, at the extremities of the toes and fingers, to *nails*. A man has only to look at his hand to observe with what nicety and precision that covering, which extends over every other part, is here superseded by a different substance, and a different texture. Now, if either the rule had been necessary, or the deviation from it accidental, this effect would not be seen. When I speak of the rule being necessary, I mean the formation of the skin upon the surface being produced by a set of causes constituted without design and acting, as all ignorant causes must act, by a general operation. Were this the case, no account could be given of the operation being suspended at the fingers' ends, or on the back part of the fingers, and not on the fore part. On the other hand: if the deviation were accidental, an error, an anomalism; were it any thing else than settled by intention; we should meet with nails upon other parts of the body. They would be scattered over the surface, like warts or pimples.

3. All the great cavities of the body are enclosed by membranes, except the *skull*. Why should not the brain be content with the same covering as that which serves for the other principal organs of the body? The heart, the lungs, the liver, the stomach, the bowels, have all soft integuments, and nothing else. The muscular coats are all soft and membranous. I can see a reason for this distinction in the final cause, but in no other. The importance of the brain to life, (which experience proves to be immediate,) and the extreme tenderness of its substance, make a solid case more necessary for it, than for any other part: and such a

case the hardness of the skull supplies. When the smallest portion of this natural casket is lost, how carefully, yet how imperfectly, is it replaced by a plate of metal! If an anatomist should say, that this bony protection is not confined to the brain, but is extended along the course of the spine, I answer that he adds strength to the argument. If he remark, that the chest also is fortified by bones; I reply, that I should have alleged this instance myself, if the ribs had not appeared subservient to the purpose of motion, as well as of defence. What distinguishes the skull from every other cavity is, that the bony covering completely surrounds its contents, and is calculated, not for motion, but solely for defence. Those hollows, likewise, and inequalities, which we observe in the inside of the skull, and which exactly fit the folds of the brain, answer the important design of keeping the substance of the brain steady, and of guarding it against concussions.

CHAPTER XII.

Comparative Anatomy.

Whenever we find a general plan pursued, yet with such variations in it as are, in each case, required by the particular exigency of the subject to which it is applied, we possess, in such plan and such adaptation, the strongest evidence that can be afforded of intelligence and design; an evidence which most completely excludes every other hypothesis. If the general plan proceeded from any fixed necessity in the nature of things, how could it accommodate itself to the various wants and uses which it had to serve under different circumstances, and on different occasions? *Arkwright's* mill was invented for the spinning of cotton. We see it employed for the spinning of wool, flax, and hemp, with such modifications of the original principle, such variety in the same plan, as the texture of those different materials rendered necessary. Of the machine's being put together with design, if it were possible to doubt, whilst we saw it only under one mode, and in one form; when we came to observe it in its different applications, with such changes of structure, such additions and supplements, as the special and particular use in each case demanded, we could not refuse any longer our assent to the proposition, "that intelligence, properly and strictly so called, (including under that name, foresight, consideration, reference to utility,) had been employed, as well in the primitive plan, as in the several changes and accommodations which it is made to undergo."

Very much of this reasoning is applicable to what has been called *Comparative Anatomy*. In their general economy, in the outlines of the plan, in the construction as well as offices of their principal parts, there exists between all large terrestrial animals a close resemblance. In all, life is sustained, and the body nourished, by nearly the same apparatus. The heart, the lungs, the stomach, the liver, the kidneys, are much alike in all. The same fluid (for no distinction of blood has been observed) circulates through their vessels, and nearly in the same order. The same cause therefore, whatever that cause was, has been concerned in the origin, has governed the production, of these different animal forms.

When we pass on to smaller animals, or to the inhabitants of a different element, the resemblance becomes more distant and more obscure; but still the plan accompanies us.

And, what we can never enough commend, and which it is our business at present to exemplify, the plan is attended, through all its varieties and deflections, by subserviences to special occasions and utilities.

1. The *covering* of different animals (though whether I am correct in classing this under their anatomy, I do not know,) is the first thing which presents itself to our observation; and is, in truth, both for its variety and its suitableness to their several natures, as much to be admired as any part of their structure. We have bristles, hair, wool, furs, feathers, quills, prickles, scales; yet in this diversity both of material and form, we cannot change one animal's coat for another, without evidently changing it for the worse; taking care however to remark, that these coverings are, in many cases, armour as well as clothing; intended for protection as well as warmth.

The *human* animal is the only one which is naked, and the only one which can clothe itself. This is one of the properties which renders him an animal of all climates, and of all seasons. He can adapt the warmth or lightness of his covering to the temperature of his habitation. Had he been born with a fleece upon his back, although he might have been comforted by its warmth in high latitudes, it would have oppressed him by its weight and heat, as the species spread towards the equator.

What art, however, does for men, nature has, in many instances, done for those animals which are incapable of art. Their clothing, of its own accord, changes with their necessities. This is particularly the case with that large tribe of quadrupeds which are covered with *furs*. Every dealer in hare-skins, and rabbit-skins, knows how much the fur is thickened by the approach of winter. It seems to be a part of the same constitution and the same design, that wool, in hot countries, degenerates, as it is called, but in truth (most happily for the animal's ease) passes into hair; whilst, on the contrary, that hair, in the dogs of the polar regions, is turned into wool, or something very like it. To which may be referred, what naturalists have remarked, that bears, wolves, foxes, hares, which do not take the water, have the fur much thicker on the back than the belly: whereas in the beaver it is the thickest upon the belly; as are the feathers in water fowl. We know the final cause of all this; and we know no other.

The *covering of birds* cannot escape the most vulgar observation. Its lightness, its smoothness, its warmth;—the disposition of the feathers all inclined backward, the down about their stem, the overlapping of their tips, their different configuration in different parts, not to mention the variety of their colours, constitute a vestment for the body, so beautiful, and so appropriate to the life which the animal is to lead, as that, I think, we should have had no conception of any thing equally perfect, if we had never seen it, or can now imagine any thing more so. Let us suppose (what is possible only in supposition) a person who had never seen a bird, to be presented with a plucked pheasant, and bid to set his wits to work, how to contrive for it a covering which

shall unite the qualities of warmth, levity, and least resistance to the air, and the highest degree of each; giving it also as much of beauty and ornament as he could afford. He is the person to behold the work of the Deity, in this part of his creation, with the sentiments which are due to it.

The commendation, which the general aspect of the feathered world seldom fails of exciting, will be increased by farther examination. It is one of those cases in which the philosopher has more to admire, than the common observer. Every *feather* is a mechanical wonder. If we look at the quill we find properties not easily brought together—strength and lightness. I know few things more remarkable than the strength and lightness of the very pen with which I am writing. If we cast our eye to the upper part of the stem, we see a material made for the purpose, used in no other class of animals, and in no other part of birds; tough, light, pliant, elastic. The pith, also, which feeds the feathers, is, amongst animal substances, *sui generis;* neither bone, flesh, membrane, nor tendon.*

But the artificial part of the feather is the *beard*, or, as it is sometimes, I believe, called, the vane. By the beards are meant, what are fastened on each side of the stem, and what constitute the breadth of the feather; what we usually strip off from one side or both, when we make a pen. The separate pieces or laminæ, of which the beard is composed, are called threads, sometimes filaments, or rays. Now the first thing which an attentive observer will remark is, how much stronger the beard of the feather shows itself to be, when pressed in a direction perpendicular to its plane, than when rubbed, either up or down, in the line of the stem; and he will soon discover the structure which occasions this difference, *viz.* that the laminæ whereof these beards are composed, are flat, and placed with their flat side towards each other; by which means, whilst they *easily* bend for the approaching of each other, as any one may perceive by drawing his finger ever so lightly upwards, they are much harder to bend out of their plane, which is the direction in which they have to encounter the impulse and pressure of the air, and in which their strength is wanted, and put to the trial.

This is one particularity in the structure of a feather; a second is still more extraordinary. Whoever examines a feather, cannot help taking notice, that the threads or laminæ of which we have been speaking, in their natural state, *unite;* that their union is something more than the mere apposition of loose surfaces; that they are not parted asunder without some degree of force; that nevertheless there is no glutinous cohesion between them; that therefore, by some mechanical means or other, they catch or clasp among themselves, thereby giving to the beard or vane its closeness and compactness of texture. Nor is this all: when two laminæ, which have been separated by accident or force, are brought together again, they immediately *reclasp:* the connexion, whatever it was, is perfectly recovered, and the beard of the feather becomes as smooth and firm as if nothing had happened to it. Draw your finger down the feather, which is against the grain, and you break, probably, the junction of some of the contiguous threads; draw your finger up the feather, and you restore all things to their former state. This is no common contrivance: and now for the mechanism by which it is effected. The threads or laminæ above-mentioned are *interlaced* with one another: and the interlacing is performed by means of a vast number of fibres, or teeth, which the laminæ shoot forth *on each side*, and which hook and grapple together. A friend of mine counted fifty of these fibres in one twentieth of an inch. These fibres are crooked; but curved after a different manner: for those which proceed from the thread on the side towards the extremity of the feather, are longer, more flexible, and bent downward; whereas those which proceed from the side towards the beginning, or quill-end of the feather, are shorter, firmer, and turn upwards. The process then which takes place, is as follows: when two laminæ are pressed together, so that these long fibres are forced far enough over the short ones, *their* crooked parts fall into the cavity made by the crooked parts of the others; just as the latch that is fastened to a door, enters into the cavity of the catch fixed to the door-post, and there hooking itself, *fastens* the door; for it is properly in this manner, that one thread of a feather is fastened to the other.

This admirable structure of the feather, which it is easy to see with the microscope, succeeds perfectly for the use to which nature has designed it; which use was not only that the laminæ might be united, but that when one thread or lamina has been separated from another by some external violence, it might be reclasped with sufficient facility and expedition.*

In the *ostrich*, this apparatus of crochets and fibres, of hooks and teeth, is wanting: and we see the consequence of the want. The filaments hang loose and separate from one another, forming only a kind of down; which constitution of the feathers, however it may fit them for the flowing honours of a lady's head-dress, may be reckoned an imperfection in the bird, inasmuch as wings, composed of these feathers, although they may greatly assist it in running, do not serve for flight.

But under the present division of our subject, our business with feathers is, as they are the *covering* of the bird. And herein a singular circumstance occurs. In the small order of birds which winter with us, from a snipe downwards, let the external colour of the feathers be what it will, their Creator has universally given them a bed of *black* down next their bodies. Black, we know, is the warmest colour: and the purpose here is, to *keep in* the heat, arising from the heart and circulation of the blood. It is farther likewise remarkable, that this is not found in larger birds; for which there is also a reason:—small birds are much more exposed to the cold than large ones; forasmuch as they present, in proportion to their bulk, a much larger surface to the air. If a turkey were divided into a number of wrens (supposing the shape of the turkey and the wren to be simi-

* The quill part of a feather is composed of circular and longitudinal fibres. In making a pen you must scrape off the coat of circular fibres, or the quill will split in a ragged, jagged manner, making what boys call *cat's teeth.*

* The above account is taken from Memoirs for a Natural History of Animals, by the Royal Academy of Paris, published in 1701, p. 219.

lar,) the surface of all the wrens would exceed the surface of the turkey, in the proportion of the length, breadth (or, of any homologous line,) of a turkey to that of a wren; which would be, perhaps, a proportion of ten to one. It was necessary therefore that small birds should be more warmly clad than large ones: and this seems to be the expedient by which that exigency is provided for.

II. In comparing different animals, I know no part of their structure which exhibits greater variety, or in that variety, a nicer accommodation to their respective conveniency, than that which is seen in the different formations of their *mouths*. Whether the purpose be the reception of aliment merely, or the catching of prey, the picking up of seeds, the cropping of herbage, the extraction of juices, the suction of liquids, the breaking and grinding of food, the taste of that food, together with the respiration of air, and, in conjunction with it, the utterance of sound; these various offices are assigned to this one part, and in different species, provided for, as they are wanted, by its different constitution. In the human species, forasmuch as there are hands to convey the food to the mouth, the mouth is flat, and by reason of its flatness, fitted only for *reception;* whereas the projecting jaws, the wide rictus, the pointed teeth of the dog and his affinities, enable them to apply their mouths to *snatch and seize* the objects of their pursuit. The full lips, the rough tongue, the corrugated cartilaginous palate, the broad cutting teeth of the ox, the deer, the horse, and the sheep, qualify this tribe for *browsing* upon their pasture; either gathering large mouthfuls at once, where the grass is long, which is the case with the ox in particular; or biting close, where it is short, which the horse and the sheep are able to do, in a degree that one could hardly expect. The retired under-jaw of a swine *works in the ground*, after the protruding snout, like a prong or plough-share, has made its way to the roots upon which it feeds. A conformation so happy, was not the gift of chance.

In *birds*, this organ assumes a new character; new both in substance and in form: but in both, wonderfully adapted to the wants and uses of a distinct mode of existence. We have no longer the fleshy lips, the teeth of enamelled bone; but we have, in the place of these two parts, and to perform the office of both, a hard substance (of the same nature with that which composes the nails, claws, and hoofs, of quadrupeds,) cut out into proper shapes, and mechanically suited to the actions which are wanted. The sharp edge and tempered point of the *sparrow's* bill picks almost every kind of seed from its concealment in the plant; and not only so, but hulls the grain, breaks and shatters the coats of the seed, in order to get at the kernel. The hooked beak of the hawk tribe separates the flesh from the bones of the animals which it feeds upon, almost with the cleanness and precision of a dissector's knife. The butcher-bird transfixes its prey upon the spike of a thorn, whilst it picks its bones. In some birds of this class, we have the *cross*-bill, *i. e.* both the upper and lower bill hooked, and their tips crossing. The *spoon*-bill enables the goose to graze, to collect its food from the bottom of pools, or to seek it amidst the soft or liquid substances with which it is mixed. The *long* tapering bill of the snipe and woodcock, penetrates still deeper into moist earth, which is the bed in which the food of that species is lodged. This is exactly the instrument which the animal wanted. It did not want strength in its bill, which was inconsistent with the slender form of the animal's neck, as well as unnecessary for the kind of aliment upon which it subsists; but it wanted length to reach its object.

But the species of bill which belongs to the birds that live by *suction*, deserves to be described in its relation to that office. They are what naturalists call serrated or dentated bills; the inside of them towards the edge, being thickly set with parallel or concentric rows of short, strong, sharp-pointed prickles. These, though they should be called teeth, are not for the purpose of mastication, like the teeth of quadrupeds; nor yet, as in fish, for the seizing and retaining of their prey; but for a quite different use. They form a filter. The *duck* by means of them discusses the mud; examining with great accuracy the puddle, the brake, every mixture which is likely to contain her food. The operation is thus carried on:—The liquid or semi-liquid substances, in which the animal has plunged her bill, she draws, by the action of her lungs, through the narrow interstices which lie between these teeth; catching, as the stream passes across her beak, whatever it may happen to bring along with it, that proves agreeable to her choice, and easily dismissing all the rest. Now, suppose the purpose to have been out of a mass of confused and heterogeneous substances, to separate for the use of the animal, or rather to enable the animal to separate for its own, those few particles which suited its taste and digestion; what more artificial, or more commodious, instrument of selection, could have been given to it, than this natural filter? It has been observed also (what must enable the bird to choose and distinguish with greater acuteness, as well, probably, as what greatly increases its luxury,) that the bills of this species are furnished with large nerves,—that they are covered with a skin,—and that the nerves run down to the very extremity. In the curlew, woodcock, and snipe, there are *three pairs* of nerves, equal almost to the optic nerve in thickness, which pass first along the roof of the mouth, and then along the upper chap down to the point of the bill, long as the bill is.

But to return to the train of our observations.—The similitude between the bills of birds and the mouths of quadrupeds, is exactly such, as, for the sake of the argument, might be wished for. It is near enough to show the continuation of the same plan: it is remote enough to exclude the supposition of the difference being produced by action or use. A more prominent contour, or a wider gap, might be resolved into the effect of continued efforts, on the part of the species, to thrust out the mouth, or open it to the stretch. But by what course of action, or exercise, or endeavour, shall we get rid of the lips, the gums, the teeth; and acquire, in the place of them, pincers of horn? By what habit shall we so completely change, not only the shape of the part, but the substance of which it is composed? The truth is, if we had seen no other than the mouths of quadrupeds, we should have thought no other could have been formed: little could we have supposed, that all the purposes of a mouth, furnished with lips, and armed with teeth, could be answered by an instrument which had none of these; could be supplied,

and that with many additional advantages, by the hardness, and sharpness, and figure, of the bills of birds. Every thing about the animal's *mouth* is mechanical. The teeth of fish have their points turned backward, like the teeth of a wool or cotton card. The teeth of lobsters work one against another, like the sides of a pair of shears. In many insects, the mouth is converted into a pump or sucker, fitted at the end sometimes with a wimble, sometimes with a forceps; by which double provisions, *viz.* of the tube and the penetrating form of the point, the insect first bores through the integuments of its prey, and then extracts the juices. And, what is most extraordinary of all, one sort of mouth as the occasion requires, shall be changed into another sort. The caterpillar could not live without teeth; in several species, the butterfly formed from it, could not use them. The old teeth therefore are cast off with the exuviæ of the grub; a new and totally different apparatus assumes their place in the fly. Amid these novelties of form, we sometimes forget that it is, all the while, the animal's *mouth*; that whether it be lips, or teeth, or bill, or beak, or shears, or pump, it is the same part diversified: and it is also remarkable, that, under all the varieties of configuration with which we are acquainted, and which are very great, the organs of taste and smelling are situated near each other.

III. To the mouth adjoins the gullet: in this part also, comparative anatomy discovers a difference of structure, adapted to the different necessities of the animal. In brutes, because the posture of their neck conduces little to the passage of the aliment, the fibres of the gullet, which act in this business, run in two close spiral lines, crossing each other: in men, these fibres run only a little obliquely from the upper end of the œsophagus to the stomach, into which, by a gentle contraction, they easily transmit the descending morsels; that is to say, for the more laborious deglutition of animals, which thrust their food *up* instead of *down*, and also through a longer passage, a proportionably more powerful apparatus of muscles is provided; more powerful, not merely by the strength of the fibres, which might be attributed to the greater exercise of their force, but in their collocation, which is a determinate circumstance, and must have been original.

IV. The gullet leads to the *intestines:* here, likewise, as before, comparing quadrupeds with man, under a general similitude we meet with appropriate differences. The *valvulæ conniventes*, or, as they are by some called, the semilunar valves, found in the human intestine, are wanting in that of brutes. These are wrinkles or plates of the innermost coat of the guts, the effect of which is to retard the progress of the food through the alimentary canal. It is easy to understand how much more necessary such a provision may be to the body of an animal of an erect posture, and in which, consequently, the weight of the food is added to the action of the intestine, than in that of a quadruped, in which the course of the food, from its entrance to its exit, is nearly horizontal: but it is impossible to assign any cause, except the final cause, for this distinction actually taking place. So far as depends upon the action of the part, this structure was more to be expected in a quadruped than in a man. In truth, it must in both have been formed, not by action, but in direct opposition to action and to pressure; but the opposition which would arise from pressure, is greater in the upright trunk than in any other. That theory therefore is pointedly contracted by the example before us. The structure is found where its generation, according to the method by which the theorist would have it generated, is the most difficult; but (*observe*) it is found where its effect is most useful.

The different length of the intestines in carnivorous and herbivorous animals, has been noticed on a former occasion. The shortest, I believe, is that of some birds of prey, in which the intestinal canal is little more than a straight passage from the mouth to the vent. The longest is in the deer kind. The intestines of a Canadian stag, four feet high, measured ninety-six feet.* The intestine of a sheep, unravelled, measured thirty times the length of the body. The intestine of a wild cat is only three times the length of the body. Universally, where the substance upon which the animal feeds is of slow concoction, or yields its chyle with more difficulty, there the passage is circuitous and dilatory, that time and space may be allowed for the change and the absorption which are necessary. Where the food is soon dissolved, or already half assimilated, an unnecessary or, perhaps, hurtful detention is avoided, by giving to it a shorter and a readier route.

V. In comparing the *bones* of different animals, we are struck, in the bones of birds, with a *propriety*, which could only proceed from the wisdom of an intelligent and designing Creator. In the bones of an animal which is to fly, the two qualities required are strength and lightness. Wherein, therefore, do the bones of birds (I speak of the cylindrical bones) differ, in these respects, from the bones of quadrupeds? In these properties: first, their cavities are much larger in proportion to the weight of the bone, than in those of quadrupeds; secondly, these cavities are empty; thirdly, the shell is of a firmer texture, than is the substance of other bones. It is easy to observe these particulars, even in picking the wing or leg of a chicken. Now, the weight being the same, the diameter, it is evident, will be greater in a hollow bone than in a solid one, and with the diameter, as every mathematician can prove, is increased, *cæteris paribus*, the strength of the cylinder, or its resistance to breaking. In a word, a bone of the *same weight* would not have been so strong in any other form; and to have made it heavier, would have incommoded the animal's flight. Yet this form could not be acquired by use, or the bone become hollow and tubular by exercise. What appetency could excavate a bone?

VI. The *lungs* also of birds, as compared with the lungs of quadrupeds, contain in them a provision, distinguishingly calculated for this same purpose of levitation; namely, a communication (not found in other kinds of animals) between the air-vessels of the lungs and the cavities of the body: so that by the intromission of air from one to the other (at the will, as it should seem, of the animal,) its body can be occasionally puffed out, and its tendency to descend in the air, or its specific gravity, made less. The bodies of birds are blown up from their lungs, (which no other animal bodies are,) and thus rendered buoyant.

VII. All birds are *oviparous*. This likewise

* Mem. Acad. Paris, 1701, p. 170.

carries on the work of gestation with as little increase as possible of the weight of the body. A gravid uterus would have been a troublesome burden to a bird in its flight. The advantage, in this respect, of an oviparous procreation, is, that, whilst the whole brood are hatched together, the eggs are excluded singly, and at considerable intervals. Ten, fifteen, or twenty young birds may be produced in one cletch or covey, yet the parent bird have never been encumbered by the load of more than one full-grown egg at one time.

VIII. A principal topic of comparison between animals, is their *instruments of motion*. These come before us under three divisions; feet, wings, and fins. I desire any man to say, which of the three is best fitted for its use; or whether the same consummate art be not conspicuous in them all. The constitution of the elements, in which the motion is to be performed is very different. The animal action must necessarily follow that constitution. The Creator, therefore, if we might so speak, had to prepare for different situations, for different difficulties: yet the purpose is accomplished not less successfully in one case than in the other. And, as between *wings* and the corresponding limbs of quadrupeds, it is accomplished without deserting the general idea. The idea is modified, not deserted. Strip a wing of its feathers, and it bears an obscure resemblance to the foreleg of a quadruped. The articulations at the shoulder, and the cubitus are much alike; and, what is a closer circumstance, in both cases the upper part of the limb consists of a single bone, the lower part of two.

But, fitted up with its furniture of feathers and quills, it becomes a wonderful instrument, more artificial than its first appearance indicates, though that be very striking: at least, the use which the bird makes of its wings in flying, is more complicated, and more curious, than is generally known. One thing is certain, that if the flapping of the wings in flight were no more than the reciprocal motion of the same surface in opposite directions, either upwards and downwards, or estimated in any oblique line, the bird would lose as much by one motion as she gained by another. The skylark could never ascend by such an action as this; for, though the stroke upon the air by the under side of her wing would carry her up, the stroke from the upper side, when she raised her wing again, would bring her down. In order, therefore, to account for the advantage which the bird derives from her wing, it is necessary to suppose, that the surface of the wing, measured upon the same plane, is contracted, whilst the wing is drawn up; and let out to its full expansion, when it descends upon the air for the purpose of moving the body by the reaction of that element. Now, the form and structure of the wing, its external convexity, the disposition, and particularly the overlapping, of its larger feathers, the action of the muscles, and joints of the pinions, are all adapted to this alternate adjustment of its shape and dimensions. Such a twist, for instance, or semirotatory motion, is given to the great feathers of the wing, that they strike the air with their flat side, but rise from the stroke slantwise. The turning of the oar in rowing, whilst the rower advances his hand for a new stroke, is a similar operation to that of the feather, and takes its name from the resemblance. I believe that this faculty is not found in the great feathers of the tail. This is the place also for observing, that the pinions are so set upon the body, as to bring down the wings not vertically, but in a direction obliquely tending towards the tail; which motion, by virtue of the common resolution of forces, does two things at the same time; supports the body in the air, and carries it forward. The *steerage* of a bird in its flight is effected partly by the wings, but in a principal degree by the tail. And herein we meet with a circumstance not a little remarkable. Birds with long legs have short tails; and in their flight, place their legs close to their bodies, at the same time stretching them out backwards as far as they can. In this position, the legs extend beyond the rump, and become the rudder: supplying that steerage which the tail could not.

From the *wings* of birds, the transition is easy to the *fins* of fish. They are both, to their respective tribes, the instruments of their motion; but, in the work which they have to do, there is a considerable difference, founded in this circumstance. Fish, unlike birds, have very nearly the same specific gravity with the element in which they move. In the case of fish, therefore, there is little or no weight to bear up; what is wanted, is only an impulse sufficient to carry the body through a resisting medium, or to maintain the posture, or to support or restore the balance of the body, which is always the most unsteady where there is no weight to sink it. For these offices, the fins are as large as necessary, though much smaller than wings, their action mechanical, their position, and the muscles by which they are moved, in the highest degree convenient. The following short account of some experiments upon fish, made for the purpose of ascertaining the use of their fins, will be the best confirmation of what we assert. In most fish, beside the great fin the tail, we find two pairs of fins upon the sides, two single fins upon the back, and one upon the belly, or rather between the belly and the tail. The *balancing* use of these organs is proved in this manner. Of the large-headed fish, if you cut off the pectoral fins, *i. e.* the pair which lies close behind the gills, the head falls prone to the bottom: if the right pectoral fin only be cut off, the fish leans to that side; if the ventral fin on the same side be cut away, then it loses its equilibrium entirely; if the dorsal and ventral fins be cut off, the fish reels to the right and left. When the fish dies, that is, when the fins cease to play, the belly turns upwards. The use of the same parts for *motion* is seen in the following observation upon them when put in action. The pectoral, and more particularly the ventral fins, serve to *raise and depress* the fish: when the fish desires to have a *retrograde* motion, a stroke forward with the pectoral fin effectually produces it; if the fish desire to *turn* either way, a single blow with the tail the opposite way, sends it round at once: if the tail strike both ways, the motion produced by the double lash is *progressive*, and enables the fish to dart forwards with an astonishing velocity.* The result is, not only in some cases, the most rapid, but in all cases, the most gentle, pliant, easy, animal motion, with which we are acquainted. However, when the tail is cut off, the fish loses all motion, and gives itself up to where the water impels it. The rest of the

* Goldsmith, Hist. of An. Nat. vol. vi. p. 154.

fins, therefore, so far as respects motion, seem to be merely subsidiary to this. In their mechanical use, the anal fin may be reckoned the keel; the ventral fins, out-riggers; the pectoral muscles, the oars; and if there be any similitude between these parts of a boat and a fish, observe, that it is not the resemblance of imitation, but the likeness which arises from applying similar mechanical means to the same purpose.

We have seen that the *tail* in the fish is the great instrument of motion. Now, in cetaceous or warm-blooded fish, which are obliged to rise every two or three minutes to the surface to take breath, the tail, unlike what it is in other fish, is horizontal; its stroke consequently, perpendicular to the horizon, which is the right direction for sending the fish to the top, or carrying it down to the bottom.

Regarding animals in their instruments of motion, we have only followed the comparison through the first great division of animals into beasts, birds, and fish. If it were our intention to pursue the consideration farther, I should take in that generic distinction amongst birds, the *web-foot* of water-fowl. It is an instance which may be pointed out to a child. The utility of the web to water-fowl, the inutility to land-fowl, are so obvious, that it seems impossible to notice the difference without acknowledging the design. I am at a loss to know, how those who deny the agency of an intelligent Creator, dispose of this example. There is nothing in the action of swimming, as carried on by a bird upon the surface of the water, that should generate a membrane between the toes. As to that membrane, it is an exercise of constant resistance. The only supposition I can think of is, that all birds have been originally water-fowl, and web-footed; that sparrows, hawks, linnets, &c. which frequent the land, have in process of time, and in the course of many generations, had this part worn away by treading upon hard ground. To such evasive assumptions must atheism always have recourse! and, after all, it confesses that the structure of the feet of birds, in their original form, was critically adapted to their original destination! The web-feet of amphibious quadrupeds, seals, otters, &c. fall under the same observation.

IX. The *five senses* are common to most large animals: nor have we much difference to remark in their constitution; or much, however, which is referable to mechanism.

The superior sagacity of animals which hunt their prey, and which, consequently, depend for their livelihood upon their *nose*, is well known, in its use; but not at all known in the organization which produces it.

The external *ears* of beasts of prey, of lions, tigers, wolves, have their trumpet-part, or concavity, standing forwards, to seize the sounds which are before them, *viz.* the sounds of the animals which they pursue or watch. The ears of animals of flight are turned backward, to give notice of the approach of their enemy from behind, whence he may steal upon them unseen. This is a critical distinction; and is mechanical: but it may be suggested, and, I think, not without probability, that it is the effect of continual habit.

The *eyes* of animals which follow their prey by night, as cats, owls, &c. possess a faculty not given to those of other species, namely, of closing the pupil *entirely*. The final cause of which seems to be this:—It was necessary for such animals to be able to descry objects with very small degrees of light. This capacity depended upon the superior sensibility of the retina; that is, upon its being affected by the most feeble impulses. But that tenderness of structure, which rendered the membrane thus exquisitely sensible, rendered it also liable to be offended by the access of stronger degrees of light. The contractile range therefore of the pupil is increased in these animals, so as to enable them to close the aperture entirely: which includes the power of diminishing it in every degree; whereby at all times such portions, and only such portions, of light are admitted, as may be received without injury to the sense.

There appears to be also in the figure, and in some properties of the pupil of the eye, an appropriate relation to the wants of different animals. In horses, oxen, goats, sheep, the pupil of the eye is elliptical; the transverse axis being horizontal; by which structure, although the eye be placed on the side of the head, the anterior elongation of the pupil catches the forward rays, or those which come from objects immediately in front of the animal's face.

CHAPTER XIII.

Peculiar Organizations.

I BELIEVE that all the instances which I shall collect under this title, might, consistently enough with technical language, have been placed under the head of *Comparative Anatomy*. But there appears to me an impropriety in the use which that term hath obtained; it being, in some sort, absurd to call that a case of comparative anatomy, in which there is nothing to "compare;" in which a conformation is found in one animal, which hath nothing properly answering to it in another. Of this kind are the examples which I have to propose in the present chapter; and the reader will see that, though some of them be the strongest, perhaps, he will meet with under any division of our subject, they must necessarily be of an unconnected and miscellaneous nature. To dispose them, however, into some sort of order, we will notice, first, particularities of structure which belong to quadrupeds, birds, and fish, as such, or to many of the kinds included in these classes of animals; and then, such particularities as are confined to one or two species.

I. Along each side of the neck of large *quadrupeds*, runs a stiff, robust cartilage, which butchers call the paxwax. No person can carve the upper end of a crop of beef without driving his knife against it. It is a tough, strong, tendinous substance, braced from the head to the middle of the back: its office is to assist in supporting the weight of the head. It is a mechanical provision, of which this is the undisputed use; and it is sufficient, and not more than sufficient, for the purpose which it has to execute. The head of an ox or a horse is a heavy weight, acting at the end of a long lever (consequently with a great purchase) and in a direction nearly perpendicular to the joints of the supporting neck. From such a force, so advantageously applied, the bones of the neck would be in constant danger of dislocation, if they were not fortified by this strong tape. No such

organ is found in the human subject, because, from the erect position of the head (the pressure of it acting nearly in the direction of the spine,) the junction of the vertebræ appears to be sufficiently secure without it. This cautionary expedient, therefore, is limited to quadrupeds: the care of the Creator is seen where it is wanted.

II. The oil with which *birds* prune their feathers, and the organ which supplies it, is a specific provision for the winged creation. On each side of the rump of birds is observed a small nipple, yielding upon pressure a butter-like substance, which the bird extracts by pinching the pap with its bill. With this oil, or ointment, thus procured, the bird dresses its coat; and repeats the action as often as its own sensations teach it that it is in any part wanted, or as the excretion may be sufficient for the expense. The gland, the pap, the nature and quality of the excreted substance, the manner of obtaining it from its lodgment in the body, the application of it when obtained, form, collectively, an evidence of intention which it is not easy to withstand. Nothing similar to it is found in unfeathered animals. What blind *conatus* of nature should produce it in birds; should not produce it in beasts?

III. The air-bladder also of a *fish* affords a plain and direct instance, not only of contrivance, but strictly of that species of contrivance which we denominate mechanical. It is a philosophical apparatus in the body of an animal. The principle of the contrivance is clear: the application of the principle is also clear. The use of the organ to sustain, and, at will, also to elevate, the body of the fish in the water, is proved by observing, what has been tried, that, when the bladder is burst, the fish grovels at the bottom; and also, that flounders, soles, skates, which are without the air-bladder, seldom rise in the water, and that with effort. The manner in which the purpose is attained, and the suitableness of the means to the end, are not difficult to be apprehended. The rising and sinking of a fish in water, so far as it is independent of the stroke of the fins and tail, can only be regulated by the specific gravity of the body. When the bladder, contained in the body of the fish, is contracted, which the fish probably possesses a muscular power of doing, the bulk of the fish is contracted along with it; whereby, since the absolute weight remains the same, the specific gravity, which is the sinking force, is increased, and the fish descends: on the contrary, when, in consequence of the relaxation of the muscles, the elasticity of the enclosed and now compressed air restores the dimensions of the bladder, the tendency downwards becomes proportionably less than it was before, or is turned into a contrary tendency. These are known properties of bodies immersed in a fluid. The enamelled figures, or little glass bubbles, in a jar of water, are made to rise and fall by the same artifice. A diving-machine might be made to ascend and descend, upon the like principle; namely, by introducing into the inside of it an air-vessel, which, by its contraction, would diminish, and by its distension enlarge, the bulk of the machine itself, and thus render it specifically heavier, or specifically lighter, than the water which surrounds it. Suppose this to be done, and the artist to solicit a patent for his invention. The inspectors of the model, whatever they might think of the use or value of the contrivance, could, by no possibility, entertain a question in their minds, whether it were a contrivance or not. No reason has ever been assigned—no reason can be assigned, why the conclusion is not as certain in the fish, as it is in the machine; why the argument is not as firm in one case as the other.

It would be very worthy of inquiry, if it were possible to discover by what method an animal which lives constantly in water, is able to supply a repository of air. The expedient, whatever it be, forms part, and perhaps the most curious part, of the provision. Nothing similar to the air-bladder is found in land-animals; and a life in the water has no natural tendency to produce a bag of air. Nothing can be farther from an acquired organization than this is.

These examples mark the attention of the Creator to the three great kingdoms of his animal creation, and to their constitution as such.—The example which stands next in point of generality, belonging to a large tribe of animals, or rather to various species of that tribe, is the poisonous tooth of serpents.

I. The *fang of a viper* is a clear and curious example of mechanical contrivance. It is a perforated tooth, loose at the root; in its quiet state, lying down flat upon the jaw, but furnished with a muscle, which, with a jerk, and by the pluck, as it were, of a string, suddenly erects it. Under the tooth, close to its root, and communicating with the perforation, lies a small bag containing the venom. When the fang is raised, the closing of the jaw presses its root against the bag underneath; and the force of this compression sends out the fluid with a considerable impetus through the tube in the middle of the tooth. What more unequivocal or effectual apparatus could be devised, for the double purpose of at once inflicting the wound and injecting the poison? Yet, though lodged in the mouth, it is so constituted, as, in its inoffensive and quiescent state, not to interfere with the animal's ordinary office of receiving its food. It has been observed also, that none of the harmless serpents, the black snake, the blind worm, &c. have these fangs, but teeth of an equal size; not moveable, as this is, but fixed into the jaw.

II. In being the property of several different species, the preceding example is resembled by that which I shall next mention, which is the *bag of the opossum*. This is a mechanical contrivance, most properly so called. The simplicity of the expedient renders the contrivance more obvious than many others, and by no means less certain. A false skin under the belly of the animal, forms a pouch, into which the young litter are received at their birth; where they have an easy and constant access to the teats; in which they are transported by the dam from place to place; where they are at liberty to run in and out; and where they find a refuge from surprise and danger. It is their cradle, their asylum, and the machine for their conveyance. Can the use of this structure be doubted of? Nor is it a mere doubling of the skin; but it is a new organ, furnished with bones and muscles of its own. Two bones are placed before the os pubis, and joined to that bone as their base. These support, and give a fixture to, the muscles which serve to open the bag. To these muscles there are antagonists, which serve in the same manner to shut it; and this office they perform so exactly, that, in the

living animal, the opening can scarcely be discerned, except when the sides are forcibly drawn asunder.* Is there any action in this part of the animal, any process arising from that action, by which these members could be formed? any account to be given of the formation, except design.

III. As a particularity, yet appertaining to more species than one; and also as strictly mechanical; we may notice a circumstance in the structure of the *claws* of certain birds. The middle claw of the heron and cormorant is toothed and notched like a saw. These birds are great fishers, and these notches assist them in holding their slippery prey. The use is evident; but the structure such as cannot at all be accounted for by the effort of the animal, or the exercise of the part. Some other fishing birds have these notches in their *bills;* and for the same purpose. The gannet, or soland goose, has the side of its bill irregularly jagged, that it may hold its prey the faster. Nor can the structure in this, more than in the former case, arise from the manner of employing the part. The smooth surfaces and soft flesh of fish, were less likely to notch the bills of birds, than the hard bodies upon which many other species feed.

We now come to particularities strictly so called, as being limited to a single species of animal. Of these, I shall take one from a quadruped, and one from a bird.

I. The *stomach of the camel* is well known to retain large quantities of water, and to retain it unchanged for a considerable length of time. This property qualifies it for living in the desert. Let us see, therefore, what is the internal organization, upon which a faculty so rare, and so beneficial, depends. A number of distinct sacks or bags (in a dromedary thirty of these have been counted) are observed to lie between the membranes of the second stomach, and to open into the stomach near the top by small square apertures. Through these orifices, after the stomach is full, the annexed bags are filled from it: and the water so deposited is, in the first place, not liable to pass into the intestines; in the second place, is kept separate from the solid aliment; and, in the third place, is out of the reach of the digestive action of the stomach, or of mixture with the gastric juice. It appears probable, or rather certain, that the animal, by the conformation of its muscles, possesses the power of squeezing back this water from the adjacent bags into the stomach, whenever thirst excites it to put this power in action.

II. The *tongue of the woodpecker* is one of those singularites which nature presents us with, when a singular purpose is to be answered. It is a particular instrument for a particular use: and what, except design, ever produces such? The woodpecker lives chiefly upon insects, lodged in the bodies of decayed or decaying trees. For the purpose of boring into the wood, it is furnished with a bill, straight, hard, angular, and sharp. When, by means of this piercer, it has reached the cells of the insects, then comes the office of its tongue: which tongue is, first, of such a length that the bird can dart it out three or four inches from the bill—in this respect differing greatly from every other species of bird; in the second place, it is tipped with a stiff, sharp, bony thorn; and, in the third place, (which appears to me the most remarkable property of all,) this tip is dentated on both sides, like the beard of an arrow or the barb of a hook. The description of the part declares its uses. The bird, having exposed the retreats of the insects by the assistance of its bill, with a motion inconceivably quick, launches out at them this long tongue; transfixes them upon the barbed needle at the end of it; and thus draws its prey within its mouth. If this be not mechanism, what is? Should it be said, that, by continual endeavours to shoot out the tongue to the stretch, the woodpecker species may by degrees have lengthened the organ itself, beyond that of other birds, what account can be given of its form, of its tips? how, in particular, did it get its barb, its dentation? These barbs, in my opinion, wherever they occur, are decisive proofs of mechanical contrivance.

III. I shall add one more example, for the sake of its novelty. It is always an agreeable discovery, when, having remarked in an animal an extraordinary structure, we come at length to find out an unexpected use for it. The following narrative furnishes an instance of this kind. The babyrouessa, or Indian hog, a species of wild boar, found in the East Indies, has two *bent* teeth, more than half a yard long, growing upwards, and (which is the singularity) from the upper jaw. These instruments are not wanted for offence: that service being provided for by two tusks issuing from the upper jaw, and resembling those of the common boar: nor does the animal use them for defence. They might seem therefore to be both a superfluity and an encumbrance. But observe the event:—the animal sleeps standing; and, in order to support its head, hooks its upper tusks upon the branches of trees.

* Goldsmith's Nat. His. vol. iv. p. 244.

CHAPTER XIV.

Prospective Contrivances.

I CAN hardly imagine to myself a more distinguishing mark, and, consequently, a more certain proof of design, than *preparation, i. e.* the providing of things before-hand, which are not to be used until a considerable time afterward: for this implies a contemplation of the future, which belongs only to intelligence.

Of these *prospective* contrivances, the bodies of animals furnish various examples.

I. The human teeth afford an instance, not only of prospective contrivance, but of the completion of the contrivance being designedly suspended. They are formed within the gums, and there they stop: the fact being, that their farther advance to maturity would not only be useless to the new-born animal, but extremely in its way; as it is evident that the act of *sucking*, by which it is for some time to be nourished, will be performed with more ease both to the nurse and to the infant, whilst the inside of the mouth, and edges of the gums, are smooth and soft, than if set with hard pointed bones. By the time they are wanted, the teeth are ready. They have been lodged within the gums for some months past, but detained, as it were, in their sockets, so long as their farther protrusion would interfere with the office to which the mouth is destined. Nature,

namely, that intelligence which was employed in creation, looked beyond the first year of the infant's life; yet, whilst she was providing for functions which were after that term to become necessary, was careful not to incommode those which preceded them. What renders it more probable that this is the effect of design, is, that the teeth are imperfect, whilst all other parts of the mouth are perfect. The lips are perfect, the tongue is perfect; the cheeks, the jaws, the palate, the pharynx, the larynx, are all perfect: the teeth alone are not so. This is the fact with respect to the human mouth: the fact also is, that the parts above enumerated are called into use from the beginning; whereas the teeth would be only so many obstacles and annoyances, if they were there. When a contrary order is necessary, a contrary order prevails. In the worm of the beetle, as hatched from the egg, the teeth are the first things which arrive at perfection. The insect begins to gnaw as soon as it escapes from the shell, though its other parts be only gradually advancing to their maturity.

What has been observed of the teeth, is true of the *horns* of animals; and for the same reason. The horn of a calf or a lamb does not bud, or at least does not sprout to any considerable length, until the animal be capable of browsing upon its pasture; because such a substance upon the forehead of the young animal would very much incommode the teat of the dam in the office of giving suck.

But in the case of the *teeth*,—of the human teeth at least, the prospective contrivance looks still farther. A succession of crops is provided, and provided from the beginning; a second tier being originally formed beneath the first, which do not come into use till several years afterward. And this double or suppletory provision meets a difficulty in the mechanism of the mouth, which would have appeared almost insurmountable. The expansion of the jaw, (the consequence of the proportionable growth of the animal, and of its skull,) necessarily separates the teeth of the first set, however compactly disposed, to a distance from one another, which would be very inconvenient. In due time, therefore, *i. e.* when the jaw has attained a great part of its dimensions, a new set of teeth springs up, (loosening and pushing out the old ones before them,) more exactly fitted to the space which they are to occupy, and rising also in such close ranks, as to allow for any extension of line, which the subsequent enlargement of the head may occasion.

II. It is not very easy to conceive a more evidently prospective contrivance, than that which, in all viviparous animals, is found in the *milk* of the female parent. At the moment the young animal enters the world, there is its maintenance ready for it. The particulars to be remarked in this economy, are neither few nor slight. We have, first, the nutritious quality of the fluid, unlike, in this respect, every other excretion of the body; and in which nature hitherto remains unimitated, neither cookery nor chymistry having been able to make milk out of grass: we have, secondly, the organ for its reception and retension: we have, thirdly, the excretory duct, annexed to the organ: and we have, lastly, the determination of the milk to the breast, at the particular juncture when it is about to be wanted. We have all these properties in the subject before us: and they are all indications of design. The last circumstance is the strongest of any. If I had been to guess beforehand, I should have conjectured, that at the time when there was an extraordinary demand for nourishment in one part of the system, there would be the least likelihood of a redundancy to supply another part. The advanced pregnancy of the female has no intelligible tendency to fill the breast with milk. The lacteal system is a constant wonder: and it adds to other causes of our admiration, that the number of the teats or paps in each species is found to bear a proportion to the number of the young. In the sow, the bitch, the rabbit, the cat, the rat, which have numerous litters, the paps are numerous, and are disposed along the whole length of the belly; in the cow and mare, they are few. The most simple account of this is to refer it to a designing Creator.

But, in the argument before us, we are entitled to consider not only animal bodies when framed, but the circumstances under which they are framed: and in this view of the subject, the constitution of many of their parts is most strictly prospective.

III. The eye is of no use, at the time when it is formed. It is an optical instrument made in a dungeon; constructed for the refraction of light to a focus, and perfect for its purpose, before a ray of light has had access to it; geometrically adapted to the properties and action of an element, with which it has no communication. It is about indeed to enter into that communication: and this is precisely the thing which evidences intention. It is *providing* for the *future*, in the closest sense which can be given to these terms: for it is providing for a future change; not for the then subsisting condition of the animal; not for any gradual progress or advance in that same condition; but for a new state, the consequence of a great and sudden alteration, which the animal is to undergo at its birth. Is it to be believed that the eye was formed, or, which is the same thing, that the series of causes was fixed by which the eye is formed, without a view to this change; without a prospect of that condition, in which its fabric, of no use at present, is about to be of the greatest; without a consideration of the qualities of that element, hitherto entirely excluded, but with which it was hereafter to hold so intimate a relation? A young man makes a pair of spectacles for himself against he grows old; for which spectacles he has no want or use whatever at the time he makes them. Could this be done without knowing and considering the defect of vision to which advanced age is subject? Would not the precise suitableness of the instrument to its purpose, of the remedy to the defect, of the convex lens to the flattened eye, establish the certainty of the conclusion, that the case, afterward to arise, had been considered beforehand, speculated upon, provided for? All which are exclusively the acts of a reasoning mind. The eye formed in one state, for use only in another state, and in a different state, affords a proof no less clear of destination to a future purpose; and a proof proportionably stronger, as the machinery is more complicated, and the adaptation more exact.

IV. What has been said of the eye, holds equally true of the lungs. Composed of air-vessels, where there is no air; elaborately constructed for the alternate admission and expulsion of an elastic

fluid, where no such fluid exists; this great organ, with the whole apparatus belonging to it, lies collapsed in the fœtal thorax; yet in order, and in readiness for action, the first moment that the occasion requires its service. This is having a machine locked up in store for future use; which incontestably proves, that the case was expected to occur, in which this use might be experienced: but expectation is the proper act of intelligence. Considering the state in which an animal exists before its birth, I should look for nothing less in its body than a system of lungs. It is like finding a pair of bellows in the bottom of the sea; of no sort of use in the situation in which they are found; formed for an action which was impossible to be exerted; holding no relation or fitness to the element which surrounds them, but both to another element in another place.

As part and parcel of the same plan ought to be mentioned, in speaking of the lungs, the provisionary contrivances of the *foramen ovale* and *ductus arteriosus*. In the fœtus, pipes are laid for the passage of the blood through the lungs; but until the lungs be inflated by the inspiration of air, that passage is impervious, or in a great degree obstructed. What then is to be done? What would an artist, what would a master, do upon the occasion? He would endeavour, most probably, to provide a *temporary* passage, which might carry on the communication required, until the other was open. Now this is the thing which is actually done in the heart:—Instead of the circuitous route through the lungs, which the blood afterward takes, before it get from one auricle of the heart to the other: a portion of the blood passes immediately from the right auricle to the left, through a hole placed in the partition, which separates these cavities. This hole, anatomists call the *foramen ovale*. There is likewise another cross cut, answering the same purpose, by what is called the *ductus arteriosus*, lying between the pulmonary artery and the aörta. But both expedients are so strictly temporary, that, after birth, the one passage is closed, and the tube which forms the other shrivelled up into a ligament. If this be not contrivance, what is?

But, forasmuch as the action of the air upon the blood in the lungs, appears to be necessary to the perfect concoction of that fluid, *i. e.* to the life and health of the animal, (otherwise the shortest route might still be the best,) how comes it to pass that the *fœtus* lives, and grows, and thrives, without it? The answer is, that the blood of the fœtus is the mother's; that it has undergone that action in her habit; that one pair of lungs serves for both. When the animals are separated, a new necessity arises; and to meet this necessity as soon as it occurs, an organization is prepared. It is ready for its purpose; it only waits for the atmosphere; it begins to play, the moment the air is admitted to it.

CHAPTER XV.

Relations.

When several different parts contribute to one effect; or, which is the same thing, when an effect is produced by the joint action of different instruments; the fitness of such parts or instruments to one another, for the purpose of producing, by their united action, the effect, is what I call *relation;* and wherever this is observed in the works of nature or of man, it appears to me to carry along with it decisive evidence of understanding, intention, art. In examining, for instance, the several parts of a *watch*, the spring, the barrel, the chain, the fusee, the balance, the wheels of various sizes, forms, and positions, what is it which would take an observer's attention, as most plainly evincing a construction, directed by thought, deliberation, and contrivance? It is the suitableness of these parts to one another; first, in the succession and order in which they act; and secondly, with a view to the effect finally produced. Thus referring the spring to the wheels, our observer sees in it, that which originates and upholds *their* motion; in the chain that which transmits the motion to the fusee; in the fusee, that which communicates it to the wheels; in the conical figure of the fusee, if he refer to the spring, he sees that which corrects the inequality of its force. Referring the wheels to one another, he notices, first, their teeth, which would have been without use or meaning, if there had been only one wheel, or if the wheels had had no connexion between themselves, or common bearing upon some joint effect; secondly, the correspondency of their position, so that the teeth of one wheel catch into the teeth of another; thirdly, the proportion observed in the number of teeth of each wheel, which determines the rate of going. Referring the balance to the rest of the works, he saw, when he came to understand its action, that which rendered their motions equable. Lastly, in looking upon the index and face of the watch, he saw the use and conclusion of the mechanism, *viz.* marking the succession of minutes and hours; but all depending upon the motions within, all upon the system of intermediate actions between the spring and the pointer. What thus struck his attention in the several parts of the watch, he might probably designate by one general name of "relation;" and observing with respect to all cases whatever, in which the origin and formation of a thing could be ascertained by evidence, that these relations were found in things produced by art and design, and in no other things, he would rightly deem of them as characteristic of such productions. —To apply the reasoning here described to the works of nature.

The animal economy is full, is made up, of these *relations:*—

I. There are, first, what, in one form or other belong to all animals, the parts and powers which successively act upon their *food*. Compare this action with the process of a manufactory. In men and quadrupeds, the aliment is, first, broken and bruised by mechanical instruments of mastication, *viz.* sharp spikes or hard knobs, pressing against or rubbing upon one another; thus ground and comminuted, it is carried by a pipe into the stomach, where it waits to undergo a great chymical action, which we call digestion: when digested, it is delivered through an orifice, which opens and shuts as there is occasion, into the first intestine: there, after being mixed with certain other ingredients, poured through a hole in the side of the vessel, it is farther dissolved: in this state, the milk, chyle, or part which is wanted, and which is suited for animal nourishment, is strained off by the mouths of very small tubes, opening into the

cavity of the intestines: thus freed from its grosser parts, the percolated fluid is carried by a long, winding, but traceable course, into the main stream of the old circulation; which conveys it in its progress, to every part of the body. Now I say again, compare this with the process of a manufactory; with the making of cider, for example; with the bruising of the apples in the mill, the squeezing of them when so bruised in the press, the fermentation in the vat, the bestowing of the liquor thus fermented in the hogsheads, the drawing off into bottles, the pouring out for use into the glass. Let any one show me any difference between these two cases, as to the point of contrivance. That which is at present under our consideration, the "relation" of the parts successively employed, is not more clear in the last case than in the first. The aptness of the jaws and teeth to prepare the food for the stomach, is, at least, as manifest as that of the cider-mill to crush the apples for the press. The concoction of the food in the stomach is as necessary for its future use, as the fermentation of the stum in the vat is to the perfection of the liquor. The disposal of the aliment afterward; the action and change which it undergoes; the route which it is made to take, in order that, and until that, it arrive at its destination, is more complex indeed and intricate, but in the midst of complication and intricacy, as evident and certain, as is the apparatus of cocks, pipes, tunnels, for transferring the cider from one vessel to another; of barrels and bottles for preserving it till fit for use; or of cups and glasses for bringing it, when wanted, to the lip of the consumer. The character of the machinery is in both cases this; that one part answers to another part, and every part to the final result.

This parallel between the alimentary operation and some of the processes of art, might be carried farther into detail. Spallanzani has remarked* a circumstantial resemblance between the stomachs of gallinaceous fowls and the structure of *corn-mills*. Whilst the two sides of the gizzard perform the office of the mill-stones, the craw or crop supplies the place of the *hopper*.

When our fowls are abundantly supplied with meat, they soon fill their craw: but it does not immediately pass thence into the gizzard; it always enters in very small quantities, in proportion to the progress of trituration; in like manner as, in a mill, a receiver is fixed above the two large stones which serve for grinding the corn; which receiver, although the corn be put into it by bushels, allows the grain to dribble only in small quantities, into the central hole in the upper mill-stone.

But we have not done with the alimentary history. There subsists a general *relation* between the external organs of an animal by which it procures its food, and the internal powers by which it digests it. Birds of prey, by their talons and beaks, are qualified to seize and devour many species, both of other birds, and of quadrupeds. The constitution of the stomach agrees exactly with the form of the members. The gastric juice of a bird of prey, of an owl, a falcon, or a kite, acts upon the animal fibre alone; it will not act upon seeds or grasses at all. On the other hand, the conformation of the mouth of the sheep or the ox is suited for browsing upon herbage. Nothing about these animals is fitted for the pursuit of living prey. Accordingly it has been found by experiments, tried not many years ago, with perforated balls, that the gastric juice of ruminating animals, such as the sheep and the ox, speedily dissolves vegetables, but makes no impression upon animal bodies. This accordancy is still more particular. The gastric juice, even of granivorous birds, will not act upon the grain, whilst whole and entire. In performing the experiment of digestion with the gastric juice in vessels, the grain must be crushed and bruised, before it be submitted to the menstruum, that is to say, must undergo by art without the body the preparatory action which the gizzard exerts upon it within the body; or no digestion will take place. So strict, in this case, is the relation between the offices assigned to the digestive organ, between the mechanical operation and the chymical process.

II. The relation of the kidneys to the bladder, and of the ureters to both, *i. e.* of the secreting organ to the vessel receiving the secreted liquor, and the pipe laid from one to the other for the purpose of conveying it from one to the other, is as manifest as it is amongst the different vessels employed in a distillery, or in the communications between them. The animal structure, in this case, being simple, and the parts easily separated, it forms an instance of correlation which may be presented by dissection to every eye, or which, indeed, without dissection, is capable of being apprehended by every understanding. This correlation of instruments to one another fixes intention somewhere.

Especially when every other solution is negatived by the conformation. If the bladder had been merely an expansion of the ureter, produced by retention of the fluid, there ought to have been a bladder for each ureter. One receptacle, fed by two pipes, issuing from different sides of the body, yet from both conveying the same fluid, is not to be accounted for by any such supposition as this.

III. Relation of parts to one another accompanies us throughout the whole animal economy. Can any relation be more simple, yet more convincing than this, that the eyes are so placed as to look in the direction in which the legs move and the hands work? It might have happened very differently if it had been left to chance. There were, at least, three quarters of the compass out of four to have erred in. Any considerable alteration in the position of the eye, or the figure of the joints, would have disturbed the line, and destroyed the alliance between the sense and the limbs.

IV. But relation perhaps is never so striking as when it subsists, not between different parts of the same thing, but between different things. The relation between a lock and a key is more obvious, than it is between different parts of the lock. A bow was designed for an arrow, and an arrow for a bow: and the design is more evident for their being separate implements.

Nor do the works of the Deity want this clearest species of relation. The *sexes* are manifestly made for each other. They form the grand relation of animated nature; universal, organic, mechanical: subsisting like the clearest relations of art, in different individuals; unequivocal, inexplicable without design.

So much so, that, were every other proof of

*Dis. I. sect. liv.

contrivance in nature dubious or obscure, this alone would be sufficient. The example is complete. Nothing is wanting to the argument. I see no way whatever of getting over it.

V. The teats of animals which give suck, bear a relation to the mouth of the suckling progeny; particularly to the lips and tongue. Here also, as before, is a correspondency of parts; which parts subsist in different individuals.

These are *general* relations, or the relations of parts which are found, either in all animals, or in large classes and descriptions of animals. *Particular* relations, or the relations which subsist between the particular configuration of one or more parts of certain species of animals, and the particular configuration of one or more other parts of the same animal, (which is the sort of relation that is, perhaps, most striking,) are such as the following:—

I. In the *swan;* the web-foot, the spoon-bill, the long neck, the thick down, the graminivorous stomach, bear all a relation to one another, inasmuch as they all concur in one design, that of supplying the occasions of an aquatic fowl, floating upon the surface of shallow pools of water, and seeking its food at the bottom. Begin with any one of these particularities of structure, and observe how the rest follow it. The web-foot qualifies the bird for swimming; the spoon-bill enables it to graze. But how is an animal, floating upon the surface of pools of water, to graze at the bottom, except by the mediation of a long neck? A long neck accordingly is given to it. Again, a warm-blooded animal, which was to pass its life upon water, required a defence against the coldness of that element. Such a defence is furnished to the swan, in the muff in which its body is wrapped. But all this outward apparatus would have been in vain, if the intestinal system had not been suited to the digestion of vegetable substances. I say, suited to the digestion of vegetable substances: for it is well known, that there are two intestinal systems found in birds: one with a membranous stomach and a gastric juice, capable of dissolving animal substances alone: the other with a crop and gizzard, calculated for the moistening, bruising, and afterward digesting, of vegetable aliment.

Or set off with any other distinctive part in the body of the swan; for instance, with a long neck. The long neck, without the web-foot, would have been an incumbrance to the bird; yet there is no necessary connexion between a long neck and a web-foot. In fact, they do not usually go together. How happens it, therefore, that they meet, only when a particular design demands the aid of both.

II. This natural relation, arising from a subserviency to a common purpose, is very observable also in the parts of a *mole.* The strong short legs of that animal, the palmated feet armed with sharp nails, the pig-like nose, the teeth, the velvet coat, the small external ear, the sagacious smell, the sunk, protected eye, all conduce to the utilities or to the safety of its under-ground life. It is a special purpose, especially consulted throughout. The form of the feet fixes the character of the animal. They are so many shovels; they determine its action to that of rooting in the ground; and every thing about its body agrees with its destination. The cylindrical figure of the mole, as well as the compactness of its form, arising from the terseness of its limbs, proportionably lessens its labour; because, according to its bulk, it thereby requires the least possible quantity of earth to be removed for its progress. It has nearly the same structure of the face and jaws as a swine, and the same office for them. The nose is sharp, slender, tendinous, strong; with a pair of nerves going down to the end of it. The plush covering, which, by the smoothness, closeness, and polish, of the short piles that compose it, rejects the adhesion of almost every species of earth, defends the animal from cold and wet, and from the impediment which it would experience by the mould sticking to its body. From soils of all kinds the little pioneer comes forth bright and clean. Inhabiting dirt, it is, of all animals, the neatest.

But what I have always most admired in the mole is its *eyes.* This animal occasionally visiting the surface, and wanting, for its safety and direction, to be informed when it does so, or when it approaches it, a perception of light was necessary. I do not know that the clearness of sight depends at all upon the size of the organ. What is gained by the largeness or prominence of the globe of the eye, is width in the field of vision. Such a capacity would be of no use to an animal which was to seek its food in the dark. The mole did not want to look about it; nor would a large advanced eye have been easily defended from the annoyance to which the life of the animal must constantly expose it. How indeed was the mole, working its way under ground, to guard its eyes at all? In order to meet this difficulty, the eyes are made scarcely larger than the head of a corking pin; and these minute globules are sunk so deeply in the skull, and lie so sheltered within the velvet of its covering, as that any contraction of what may be called the eye-brows, not only closes up the apertures which lead to the eyes, but presents a cushion, as it were, to any sharp or protruding substance which might push against them. This aperture, even in its ordinary state, is like a pin-hole in a piece of velvet, scarcely pervious to loose particles of earth.

Observe then, in this structure, that which we call relation. There is no natural connexion between a small sunk eye and a shovel palmated foot. Palmated feet might have been joined with goggle eyes; or small eyes might have been joined with feet of any other form. What was it therefore which brought them together in the mole? That which brought together the barrel, the chain, and the fusee, in a watch; design: and design, in both cases, inferred, from the relation which the parts bear to one another in the prosecution of a common purpose. As hath already been observed, there are different ways of stating the relation, according as we set out from a different part. In the instance before us, we may either consider the shape of the feet, as qualifying the animal for that mode of life and inhabitation to which the structure of its eyes confines it; or we may consider the structure of the eye, as the only one which would have suited with the action to which the feet are adapted. The relation is manifest, whichever of the parts related we place first in the order of our consideration. In a word; the feet of the mole are made for digging; the neck, nose, eyes, ears, and skin, are peculiarly

adapted to an under-ground life; and this is what I call relation.

CHAPTER XVI.

Compensation.

Compensation is a species of relation. It is relation when the *defects* of one part, or of one organ are supplied by the structure of another part or of another organ. Thus,

I. The short unbending neck of the *elephant*, is compensated by the length and flexibility of his *proboscis*. He could not have reached the ground without it; or, if it be supposed that he might have fed upon the fruit, leaves, or branches of trees, how was he to drink? Should it be asked, Why is the elephant's neck so short? it may be answered, that the weight of a head so heavy could not have been supported at the end of a longer lever. To a form, therefore, in some respects necessary, but in some respects also inadequate to the occasion of the animal, a supplement is added, which exactly makes up the deficiency under which he laboured.

If it be suggested that this proboscis may have been produced, in a long course of generations, by the constant endeavour of the elephant to thrust out his nose, (which is the general hypothesis by which it has lately been attempted to account for the forms of animated nature,) I would ask, How was the animal to subsist in the mean time; during the process; *until* this prolongation of snout were completed? What was to become of the individual, whilst the species was perfecting?

Our business at present is simply to point out the relation which this organ bears to the peculiar figure of the animal to which it belongs. And herein all things correspond. The necessity of the elephant's proboscis arises from the shortness of his neck; the shortness of the neck is rendered necessary by the weight of the head. Were we to enter into an examination of the structure and anatomy of the proboscis itself, we should see in it one of the most curious of all examples of animal mechanism. The disposition of the ringlets and fibres, for the purpose, first, of forming a long cartilaginous pipe: secondly, of contracting and lengthening that pipe: thirdly, of turning it in every direction at the will of the animal: with the superaddition at the end, of a fleshy production, of about the length and thickness of a finger, and performing the office of a finger, so as to pick up a straw from the ground: these properties of the same organ, taken together, exhibit a specimen, not only of design (which is attested by the advantage) but of consummate art, and, as I may say, of elaborate preparation, in accomplishing that design.

II. The hook in the wing of a *bat* is strictly a mechanical, and also a *compensating* contrivance. At the angle of its wing there is a bent claw, exactly in the form of a hook, by which the bat attaches itself to the sides of rocks, caves, and buildings, laying hold of crevices, joinings, chinks, and roughnesses. It hooks itself by this claw; remains suspended by this hold: takes its flight from this position: which operations compensate for the decrepitude of its legs and feet. Without her hook, the bat would be the most helpless of all animals. She can neither run upon her feet, nor raise herself from the ground. These inabilities are made up to her by the contrivance in her wing: and in placing a claw on that part, the Creator has deviated from the analogy observed in winged animals.—A singular defect required a singular substitute.

III. The *crane* kind are to live and seek their food amongst the waters; yet, having no web-feet, are incapable of swimming. To make up for this deficiency, they are furnished with long legs for wading, or long bills for groping; or usually with both. This is *compensation*. But I think the true reflection upon the present instance is, how every part of nature is tenanted by appropriate inhabitants. Not only is the surface of deep waters peopled by numerous tribes of birds that swim, but marshes and shallow pools are furnished with hardly less numerous tribes of birds that wade.

IV. The common *parrot* has, in the structure of its beak, both an inconveniency, and a *compensation* for it. When I speak of an inconveniency, I have a view to a dilemma which frequently occurs in the works of nature, *viz.* that the peculiarity of structure by which an organ is made to answer one purpose, necessarily unfits it for some other purpose. This is the case before us. The upper bill of the parrot is so much hooked, and so much overlaps the lower, that if, as in other birds, the lower chap alone had motion, the bird could scarcely gape wide enough to receive its food: yet this hook and overlapping of the bill could not be spared, for it forms the very instrument by which the bird climbs; to say nothing of the use which it makes of it in breaking nuts and the hard substances upon which it feeds. How, therefore, has nature provided for the opening of this occluded mouth? by making the upper chap moveable, as well as the lower. In most birds, the upper chap is connected, and makes but one piece, with the skull; but in the parrot, the upper chap is joined to the bone of the head by a strong membrane placed on each side of it, which lifts and depresses it at pleasure.*

V. The *spider's web* is a *compensating* contrivance. The spider lives upon flies, without wings to pursue them; a case, one would have thought of great difficulty, yet provided for, and provided for by a resource which no stratagem, no effort of the animal could have produced, had not both its external and internal structure been specifically adapted to the operation.

VI. In many species of insects, the eye is fixed; and consequently without the power of turning the pupil to the object. This great defect is, however, perfectly *compensated;* and by a mechanism which we should not suspect. The eye is a multiplying-glass, with a lens looking in every direction and catching every object. By which means, although the orb of the eye be stationary, the field of vision is as ample as that of other animals, and is commanded on every side. When this lattice-work was first observed, the multiplicity and minuteness of the surfaces must have added to the surprise of the discovery. Adams tells us, that fourteen hundred of these reticulations have been counted in the two eyes of a drone-bee.

* Goldsmith's Natural History, vol. v. p. 274.

In other cases the *compensation* is effected by the number and position of the eyes themselves. The spider has eight eyes, mounted upon different parts of the head; two in front, two in the top of the head; two on each side. These eyes are without motion; but by their situation, suited to comprehend every view which the wants or safety of the animal rendered it necessary for it to take.

VII. The Memoirs for the Natural History of Animals, published by the French Academy, A. D. 1687, furnish us with some curious particulars in the eye of a chameleon. Instead of two eyelids, it is covered by an eyelid with a hole in it. This singular structure appears to be *compensatory*, and to answer to some other singularities in the shape of the animal. The neck of the chameleon is inflexible. To make up for this, the eye is so prominent, as that more than half of the ball stands out of the head; by means of which extraordinary projection, the pupil of the eye can be carried by the muscles in every direction, and is capable of being pointed towards every object. But then, so unusual an exposure of the globe of the eye requires, for its lubricity and defence, a more than ordinary protection of eyelid, as well as a more than ordinary supply of moisture; yet the motion of an eyelid, formed according to the common construction, would be impeded, as it should seem, by the convexity of the organ. The aperture in the lid meets this difficulty. It enables the animal to keep the principal part of the surface of the eye under cover, and to preserve it in a due state of humidity without shutting out the light: or without performing every moment a nictitation, which, it is probable, would be more laborious to this animal than to others.

VIII. In another animal, and in another part of the animal economy, the same Memoirs describe a most remarkable *substitution*. The reader will remember what we have already observed concerning the *intestinal* canal; that its length, so many times exceeding that of the body, promotes the extraction of the chyle from the aliment, by giving room for the lacteal vessels to act upon it through a greater space. This long intestine, wherever it occurs, is, in other animals, disposed in the abdomen from side to side in returning folds. But, in the animal now under our notice, the matter is managed otherwise. The same intention is mechanically effectuated; but by a mechanism of a different kind. The animal of which I speak, is an amphibious quadruped, which our authors call the alopecias, or sea-fox. The intestine is straight from one end to the other: but in this straight, and consequently short intestine, is a winding, corkscrew, spiral passage, through which the food, not without several circumvolutions, and in fact by a long route, is conducted to its exit. Here the shortness of the gut is *compensated* by the obliquity of the perforation.

IX. But the works of the Deity are known by expedients. Where we should look for absolute destitution; where we can reckon but wants; some contrivance always comes in, to supply the privation. A *snail*, without wings, feet, or thread, climbs up the stalks of plants, by the sole aid of a viscid humour discharged from her skin. She adheres to the stems, leaves, and fruits, of plants, by means of a sticking plaster. A *muscle*, which might seem, by its helplessness to lie at the mercy of every wave that went over it, has the singular power of spinning strong, tendinous threads, by which she moors her shell to rocks and timbers. A *cockle*, on the contrary, by means of its stiff tongue, works for itself a shelter in the sand. The provisions of nature extend to cases the most desperate.

A *lobster* has in its constitution a difficulty so great, that one could hardly conjecture beforehand how nature would dispose of it. In most animals, the skin grows with their growth. If, instead of a soft skin, there be a shell, still it admits of a gradual enlargement. If the shell, as in the tortoise, consist of several pieces, the accession of substance is made at the sutures. Bivalve shells grow bigger by receiving an accretion at their edge; it is the same with spiral shells at their mouth. The simplicity of their form admits of this. But the lobster's shell being applied to the limbs of the body, as well as to the body itself, allows not of either of the modes of growth which are observed to take place in other shells. Its hardness resists expansion: and its complexity renders it incapable of increasing its size by addition of substance to its edge. How then was the growth of the lobster to be provided for? Was room to be made for it in the old shell, or was it to be successively fitted with new ones? If a change of shell became necessary, how was the lobster to extricate himself from his present confinement? how was he to uncase his buckler, or draw his legs out of his boots? The process which fishermen have observed to take place is as follows:—At certain seasons, the shell of the lobster grows soft; the animal swells its body; the seams open, and the claws burst at the joints. When the shell has thus become loose upon the body, the animal makes a second effort, and by a tremulous, spasmodic motion, casts it off. In this state, the liberated but defenceless fish retires into holes in the rock. The released body now suddenly pushes its growth. In about eight-and-forty hours, a fresh concretion of humour, upon the surface, *i. e.* a new shell, is formed, adapted in every part to the increased dimensions of the animal. This wonderful mutation is repeated every year.

If there be imputed defects without compensation, I should suspect that they were defects only in appearance. Thus, the body of the *sloth* has often been reproached for the slowness of its motions, which has been attributed to an imperfection in the formation of its limbs. But it ought to be observed, that it is this slowness which alone suspends the voracity of the animal. He fasts during his migration from one tree to another: and this fast may be necessary for the relief of his overcharged vessels, as well as to allow time for the concoction of the mass of coarse and hard food which he has taken into his stomach. The tardiness of his pace seems to have reference to the capacity of his organs, and to his propensities with respect to food; *i. e.* is calculated to counteract the effects of repletion.

Or there may be cases, in which a defect is artificial, and compensated by the very cause which produces it. Thus the *sheep*, in the domesticated state in which we see it, is destitute of the ordinary means of defence or escape; is incapable either of resistance or flight. But this is not so with the wild animal. The natural sheep is swift and active; and, if it lose these qualities when it comes under the subjection of man, the loss is compen-

sated by his protection. Perhaps there is no species of quadruped whatever, which suffers so little as this does, from the depredation of animals of prey.

For the sake of making our meaning better understood, we have considered this business of compensation under certain *particularities* of constitution, in which it appears to be most conspicuous. This view of the subject necessarily limits the instances to single species of animals. But there are compensations, perhaps not less certain, which extend over large classes, and to large portions of living nature.

I. In quadrupeds, the deficiency of teeth is usually *compensated* by the faculty of rumination. The sheep, deer, and ox tribe, are without fore-teeth in the upper jaw. These ruminate. The horse and ass are furnished with teeth in the upper jaw, and do not ruminate. In the former class, the grass and hay descend into the stomach, nearly in the state in which they are cropped from the pasture, or gathered from the bundle. In the stomach, they are softened by the gastric juice, which in these animals is unusually copious. Thus softened and rendered tender, they are returned a second time to the action of the mouth, where the grinding teeth complete at their leisure the trituration which is necessary, but which was before left imperfect. I say, the trituration which is necessary; for it appears from experiments, that the gastric fluid of sheep, for example, has no effect in digesting plants, unless they have been previously masticated; that it only produces a slight maceration; nearly as common water would do in a like degree of heat; but that when once vegetables are reduced to pieces by mastication, the fluid then exerts upon them its specific operation. Its first effect is to soften them, and to destroy their natural consistency; it then goes on to dissolve them; not sparing even the toughest parts, such as the nerves of the leaves.*

I think it very probable, that the gratification also of the animal is renewed and prolonged by this faculty. Sheep, deer, and oxen, appear to be in a state of enjoyment whilst they are chewing the cud. It is then, perhaps, that they best relish their food.

II. In birds, the *compensation* is still more striking. They have no teeth at all. What have they then to make up for this severe want? I speak of granivorous and herbivorous birds; such as common fowls, turkeys, ducks, geese, pigeons, &c.; for it is concerning these alone that the question need be asked. All these are furnished with a peculiar and most powerful muscle, called the *gizzard;* the inner coat of which is fitted up with rough plaits, which, by a strong friction against one another, break and grind the hard aliment as effectually, and by the same mechanical action, as a coffee-mill would do. It has been proved by the most correct experiments, that the gastric juice of these birds will not operate upon the *entire* grain; not even when softened by water or macerated in the crop. Therefore without a grinding machine within its body, without the trituration of the gizzard, a chicken would have starved upon a heap of corn. Yet why should a bill and a gizzard go together? Why should a gizzard never be found where there are teeth.

* Spall. Dis. iii. sect. cxl.

Nor does the gizzard belong to birds as such. A gizzard is not found in birds of prey. *Their* food requires not to be ground down in a mill. The compensatory contrivance goes no farther than the necessity. In both classes of birds, however, the digestive organ within the body bears a strict and mechanical relation to the external instruments for procuring food. The soft membranous stomach accompanies a hooked, notched beak; short, muscular legs; strong, sharp, crooked talons: the cartilaginous stomach attends that conformation of bill and toes, which restrains the bird to the picking of seeds, or the cropping of plants.

III. But to proceed with our *compensations.*—A very numerous and comprehensive tribe of terrestrial animals are entirely without feet; yet locomotive; and in a very considerable degree swift in their motion. How is the *want of feet* compensated? It is done by the disposition of the muscles and fibres of the trunk. In consequence of the just collocation, and by means of the joint action of longitudinal and annular fibres, that is to say, of strings and rings, the body and train of reptiles are capable of being reciprocally shortened and lengthened, drawn up and stretched out. The result of this action is a progressive, and, in some cases, a rapid movement of the whole body, in any direction to which the will of the animal determines it. The meanest creature is a collection of wonders. The play of the rings in an *earth-worm*, as it crawls; the undulatory motion propagated along the body; the beards or prickles with which the annuli are armed, and which the animal can either shut up close to its body, or let out to lay hold of the roughness of the surface upon which it creeps; and the power arising from all these, of changing its place and position, afford, when compared with the provisions for motion in other animals, proofs of new and appropriate mechanism. Suppose that we had never seen an animal move upon the ground without feet, and that the problem was,—muscular action, *i. e.* reciprocal contraction and relaxation being given, to describe how such an animal might be constructed, capable of voluntarily changing place. Something, perhaps, like the organization of reptiles might have been hit upon by the ingenuity of an artist; or might have been exhibited in an automaton, by the combination of springs, spiral wires, and ringlets: but to the solution of the problem would not be denied, surely, the praise of invention and of successful thought: least of all could it ever be questioned, whether intelligence had been employed about it, or not.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Relation of animated Bodies to inanimate Nature.

We have already considered *relation*, and under different views; but it was the relation of parts to parts, of the parts of an animal to other parts of the same animal, or of another individual of the same species.

But the bodies of animals hold, in their constitution and properties, a close and important relation to natures altogether external to their own; to inanimate substances, and to the specific quali-

ties of these; *e. g. they hold a strict relation to the* ELEMENTS *by which they are surrounded.*

I. Can it be doubted, whether the *wings of birds* bear a relation to air, and the *fins of fish* to water? They are instruments of motion, severally suited to the properties of the medium in which the motion is to be performed: which properties are different. Was not this difference contemplated, when the instruments were differently constituted?

II. The structure of the animal *ear* depends for its use, not simply upon being surrounded by a fluid, but upon the specific nature of that fluid. Every fluid would not serve: its particles must repel one another; it must form an elastic medium: for it is by the successive pulses of *such* a medium, that the undulations excited by the surrounding body are carried to the organ; that a communication is formed between the object and the sense; which must be done, before the internal machinery of the ear, subtile as it is, can act at all.

III. The *organs* of voice, and respiration, are no less than the ear, indebted, for the success of their operation, to the peculiar qualities of the fluid in which the animal is immersed. They, therefore, as well as the ear, are constituted upon the supposition of such a fluid, *i. e.* of a fluid with such particular properties, being always present. Change the properties of the fluid, and the organ cannot act; change the organ and the properties of the fluid would be lost. The structure therefore of our organs, and the properties of our atmosphere, are made for one another. Nor does it alter the relation, whether you allege the organ to be made for the element (which seems the most natural way of considering it,) or the element as prepared for the organ.

IV. But there is another fluid with which we have to do; with properties of its own; with laws of acting, and of being acted upon, totally different from those of air and water: and that is *light.* To this new, this singular element; to qualities perfectly peculiar, perfectly distinct and remote from the qualities of any other substance with which we are acquainted, an organ is adapted, an instrument is correctly adjusted, not less peculiar amongst the parts of the body, not less singular in its form, and in the substance of which it is composed, not less remote from the materials, the model, and the analogy, of any other part of the animal frame, than the element to which it relates, is specific amidst the substances with which we converse. If this does not prove appropriation, I desire to know what would prove it.

Yet the element of light and the organ of vision, however related in their office and use, have no connexion whatever in their original. The action of rays of light upon the surfaces of animals, has no tendency to breed eyes in their heads. The sun might shine for ever upon living bodies, without the smallest approach towards producing the sense of sight. On the other hand also, the animal eye does *not* generate or emit light.

V. Throughout the universe there is a wonderful *proportioning* of one thing to another. The size of animals, of the human animal especially, when considered with respect to other animals, or to the plants which grow around him, is such as a regard to his conveniency would have pointed out. A giant or a pigmy could not have milked goats, reaped corn, or mowed grass; we may add, could not have rode a horse, trained a vine, shorn a sheep, with the same bodily ease as we do, if at all. A pigmy would have been lost amongst rushes, or carried off by birds of prey.

It may be mentioned likewise, that the model and the materials of the human body being what they are, a much greater bulk would have broken down by its own weight. The persons of men who much exceed the ordinary stature, betray this tendency.

VI. Again, (and which includes a vast variety of particulars, and those of the greatest importance;) how close is the *suitableness* of the earth and sea to their several inhabitants; and of these inhabitants, to the places of their appointed residence!

Take the *earth* as it is; and consider the correspondency of the powers of its inhabitants with the properties and condition of the soil which they tread. Take the inhabitants as they are; and consider the substances which the earth yields for their use. They can scratch its surface; and its surface supplies all which they want. This is the length of their faculties: and such is the constitution of the globe, and their own, that this is sufficient for all their occasions.

When we pass from the earth to the *sea*, from land to water, we pass through a great change; but an adequate change accompanies us, of animal forms and functions, of animal capacities and wants; so that *correspondency* remains. The earth in its nature is very different from the sea, and the sea from the earth: but one accords with its inhabitants as exactly as the other.

VII. The last relation of this kind which I shall mention, is that of *sleep* to *night;* and it appears to me to be a relation which was expressly intended. Two points are manifest: first, that the animal frame requires sleep; secondly, that night brings with it a silence, and a cessation of activity, which allows of sleep being taken without interruption, and without loss. Animal existence is made up of action and slumber; nature has provided a season for each. An animal which stood not in need of rest, would always live in day-light. An animal, which, though made for action, and delighting in action, must have its strength repaired by sleep, meets, by its constitution, the returns of day and night. In the human species, for instance, were the bustle, the labour, the motion of life, upheld by the constant presence of light, sleep could not be enjoyed without being disturbed by noise, and without expense of that time which the eagerness of private interest would not contentedly resign. It is happy therefore for this part of the creation, I mean that it is conformable to the frame and wants of their constitution, that nature, by the very disposition of her elements, has commanded, as it were, and imposed upon them, at moderate intervals, a general intermission of their toils, their occupations, and pursuits.

But it is not for man, either solely or principally, that night is made. Inferior, but less perverted natures, taste its solace, and expect its return, with greater exactness and advantage than he does. I have often observed, and never observed but to admire, the satisfaction, no less than the regularity, with which the greatest part of the irrational world yield to this soft necessity, this grateful vicissitude; how comfortably the birds of the air for example address themselves to the repose of the evening; with what alertness they resume the activity of the day!

Nor does it disturb our argument to confess, that certain species of animals are in motion during the night, and at rest in the day. With respect even to them, it is still true, that there is a change of condition in the animal, and an external change corresponding with it. There is still the relation, though inverted. The fact is, that the repose of other animals sets these at liberty, and invites them to their food or their sport.

If the relation of *sleep* to *night*, and in some instances, its converse, be real, we cannot reflect without amazement upon the extent to which it carries us. Day and night are things close to us; the change applies immediately to our sensations; of all the phenomena of nature, it is the most obvious and the most familiar to our experience: but, in its cause, it belongs to the great motions which are passing in the heavens. Whilst the earth glides round her axle, she ministers to the alternate necessities of the animals dwelling upon her surface, at the same time that she obeys the influence of those attractions which regulate the order of many thousand worlds. The relation, therefore, of sleep to night, is the relation of the inhabitants of the earth to the rotation of their globe; probably it is more; it is a relation to the system, of which that globe is a part; and, still farther, to the congregation of systems, of which theirs is only one. If this account be true, it connects the meanest individual with the universe itself; a chicken roosting upon its perch, with the spheres revolving in the firmament.

VIII. But if any one object to our representation, that the succession of day and night, or the rotation of the earth upon which it depends, is not resolvable into central attraction, we will refer him to that which certainly is, to the change of the seasons. Now the constitution of animals susceptible of torpor, bears a relation to winter, similar to that which sleep bears to night. Against not only the cold, but the want of food, which the approach of winter induces, the Preserver of the world has provided in many animals by migration, in many others by torpor. As one example out of a thousand; the bat, if it did not sleep through the winter, must have starved, as the moths and flying insects upon which it feeds disappear. But the transition from summer to winter carries us into the very midst of physical astronomy; that is to say, into the midst of those laws which govern the solar system at least, and probably all the heavenly bodies.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Instincts.

The order may not be very obvious, by which I place *instincts* next to relation. But I consider them as a species of relations. They contribute, along with the animal organization, to a joint effect, in which view they are related to that organization. In many cases, they refer from one animal to another animal; and, when this is the case, become strictly relations in a second point of view.

An instinct is a propensity prior to experience, and independent of instruction. We contend, that it is by *instinct* that the sexes of animals seek each other; that animals cherish their offspring; that the young quadruped is directed to the teat of its dam; that birds build their nests, and brood with so much patience upon their eggs; that insects which do not sit upon their eggs, deposit them in those particular situations, in which the young, when hatched, find their appropriate food; that it is instinct which carries the salmon, and some other fish, out of the sea into rivers, for the purpose of shedding their spawn in fresh water.

We may select out of *this* catalogue the incubation of eggs. I entertain no doubt, but that a couple of sparrows hatched in an oven, and kept separate from the rest of their species, would proceed as other sparrows do, in every office which related to the production and preservation of their brood. Assuming this fact, the thing is inexplicable upon any other hypothesis than that of an instinct, impressed upon the constitution of the animal. For, first, what should induce the female bird to prepare a nest before she lays her eggs? It is in vain to suppose her to be possessed of the faculty of reasoning: for, no reasoning will reach the case. The fulness or distension which she might feel in a particular part of her body, from the growth and solidity of the egg within her, could not possibly inform her, that she was about to produce something, which, when produced, was to be preserved and taken care of. Prior to experience, there was nothing to lead to this inference, or to this suspicion. The analogy was *all* against it: for in every other instance, what issued from the body was cast out and rejected.

But, secondly, let us suppose the egg to be produced into day; how should birds know that their eggs contain their young? There is nothing, either in the aspect or in the internal composition of an egg, which could lead even the most daring imagination to conjecture, that it was hereafter to turn out from under its shell, a living, perfect bird. The form of the egg bears not the rudiments of a resemblance to that of the bird. Inspecting its contents, we find still less reason, if possible, to look for the result which actually takes place. If we should go so far, as, from the appearance of order and distinction in the disposition of the liquid substances which we noticed in the egg, to guess that it might be designed for the abode and nutriment of an animal, (which would be a very bold hypothesis,) we should expect a tadpole dabbling in the slime, much rather than a dry, winged, feathered creature; a compound of parts and properties impossible to be used in a state of confinement in the egg, and bearing no conceivable relation, either in quality or material, to any thing observed in it. From the white of an egg, would any one look for the feather of a goldfinch? or expect from a simple uniform mucilage, the most complicated of all machines; the most diversified of all collections of substances? Nor would the process of incubation, for some time at least, lead us to suspect the event. Who that saw red streaks, shooting in the fine membrane which divides the white from the yolk, would suppose that these were about to become bones and limbs? Who, that espied two discoloured points first making their appearance in the cicatrix, would have had the courage to predict, that these points were to grow into the heart and head of a bird? It is difficult to strip the mind of its experience. It is difficult to resuscitate surprise, when familiarity has once laid the sentiment asleep. But could we forget all we know, and which *our* sparrows

never knew, about oviparous generation; could we divest ourselves of every information, but what we derived from reasoning upon the appearances or quality discovered in the objects presented to us; I am convinced that Harlequin coming out of an egg upon the stage, is not more astonishing to a child, than the hatching of a chicken both would be, and ought to be, to a philosopher.

But admit the sparrow by some means to know, that within that egg was concealed the principle of a future bird: from what chymist was she to learn, that *warmth* was necessary to bring it to maturity, or that the degree of warmth, imparted by the temperature of her own body, was the degree required?

To suppose, therefore, that the female bird acts in this process from a sagacity and reason of her own, is to suppose her to arrive at conclusions which there are no premises to justify. If our sparrow, sitting upon her eggs, expect young sparrows to come out of them, she forms, I will venture to say, a wild and extravagant expectation, in opposition to present appearances, and to probability. She must have penetrated into the order of nature, farther than any faculties of ours will carry us: and it hath been well observed, that this deep sagacity, if it be sagacity, subsists in conjunction with great stupidity, even in relation to the same subject. "A chymical operation," says Addison, "could not be followed with greater art or diligence, than is seen in hatching a chicken: yet is the process carried on without the least glimmering of thought or common sense. The hen will mistake a piece of chalk for an egg; is insensible of the increase or diminution of their number; does not distinguish between her own and those of another species; is frightened when her suppositious breed of ducklings take the water."

But it will be said, that what reason could not do for the bird, observation, or instruction, or tradition, might. Now if it be true, that a couple of sparrows, brought up from the first in a state of separation from all other birds, would build their nest, and brood upon their eggs, then there is an end to this solution. What can be the traditionary knowledge of a chicken hatched in an oven?

Of young birds taken in their nests, a few species breed, when kept in cages; and they which do so, build their nests nearly in the same manner as in the wild state, and sit upon their eggs. This is sufficient to prove an instinct, without having recourse to experiments upon birds hatched by artificial heat, and deprived, from their birth, of all communication with their species: for we can hardly bring ourselves to believe, that the parent bird informed her unfledged pupil of the history of her gestation, her timely preparation of a nest, her exclusion of the eggs, her long incubation, and of the joyful eruption at last of her expected offspring; all which the bird in the cage must have learnt in her infancy, if we resolve her conduct into *institution*.

Unless we will rather suppose, that she remembers her own escape from the egg; had attentively observed the conformation of the nest in which she was nurtured; and had treasured up her remarks for future imitation: which is not only extremely improbable, (for who, that sees a brood of callow birds in their nest, can believe that they are taking a plan of their habitation?) but leaves unaccounted for, one principal part of the difficulty, "the preparation of the nest before the laying of the egg." This she could not gain from observation in her infancy.

It is remarkable also, that the hen sits upon eggs which she has laid without any communication with the male; and which are therefore necessarily unfruitful. That secret she is not let into. Yet if incubation had been a subject of instruction or of tradition, it should seem that this distinction would have formed part of the lesson: whereas the instinct of nature is calculated for a state of nature: the exception here alluded to, taking place chiefly, if not solely, amongst domesticated fowls, in which nature is forced out of her course.

There is another case of oviparous economy, which is still less likely to be the effect of education than it is even in birds, namely that of *moths* and *butterflies*, which deposit their eggs in the precise substance, that of a cabbage for example, from which, not the butterfly herself, but the caterpillar which is to issue from her egg, draws its appropriate food. The butterfly cannot taste the cabbage. Cabbage is no food for her: yet in the cabbage, not by chance, but studiously and electively, she lays her eggs. There are, amongst many other kinds, the willow-caterpillar and the cabbage-caterpillar: but we never find upon a willow the caterpillar which eats the cabbage; nor the converse. This choice, as appears to me, cannot in the butterfly proceed from instruction. She had no teacher in her caterpillar state. She never knew her parent. I do not see, therefore, how knowledge acquired by experience, if it ever were such, could be transmitted from one generation to another. There is no opportunity either for instruction or imitation. The parent race is gone, before the new brood is hatched. And if it be original reasoning in the butterfly, it is profound reasoning indeed. She must remember her caterpillar state, its tastes and habits: of which memory she shows no signs whatever. She must conclude from analogy (for here her recollection cannot serve her,) that the little round body which drops from her abdomen, will at a future period produce a living creature, not like herself, but like the caterpillar which she remembers herself once to have been. Under the influence of these reflections, she goes about to make provision for an order of things, which she concludes will, some time or other, take place. And it is to be observed, that not a few out of many, but that all butterflies argue thus; all draw this conclusion; all act upon it.

But suppose the address, and the selection, and the plan, which we perceive in the preparations which many irrational animals make for their young, to be traced to some probable origin; still there is left to be accounted for, that which is the source and foundation of these phenomena, that which sets the whole at work, the στοργη, the parental affection, which I contend to be inexplicable upon any other hypothesis than that of instinct.

For we shall hardly, I imagine, in brutes, refer their conduct towards their offspring to a sense of duty, or of decency, a care of reputation, a compliance with public manners, with public laws, or with rules of life built upon a long experience of their utility. And all attempts to account for the parental affection from association, I think, fail. With what is it associated? Most immediately

with the throes of parturition, that is, with pain and terror and disease. The more remote, but not less strong association, that which depends upon analogy, is all against it. Every thing else which proceeds from the body, is cast away, and rejected. In birds, is it the egg which the hen loves? or is it the expectation which she cherishes of a future progeny, that keeps her upon her nest? What cause has she to expect delight from her progeny? Can any rational answer be given to the question, why, prior to experience, the brooding hen should look for pleasure from her chickens? It does not, I think, appear, that the cuckoo ever knows her young: yet, in her way, she is as careful in making provision for them, as any other bird. She does not leave her egg in every hole.

The salmon suffers no surmountable obstacle to oppose her progress up the stream of fresh rivers. And what does she do there? She sheds a spawn, which she immediately quits, in order to return to the sea: and this issue of her body, she never afterward recognises in any shape whatever. Where shall we find a motive for her efforts and her perseverance? Shall we seek it in argumentation, or in instinct? The violet crab of Jamaica performs a fatiguing march of some months' continuance, from the mountains to the sea side. When she reaches the coast, she casts her spawn into the open sea; and sets out upon her return home.

Moths and butterflies, as hath already been observed, seek out for their eggs those precise situations and substances in which the offspring caterpillar will find its appropriate food. That dear caterpillar, the parent butterfly must never see. There are no experiments to prove that she would retain any knowledge of it, if she did. How shall we account for her conduct? I do not mean for her art and judgment in selecting and securing a maintenance for her young, but for the impulse upon which she acts. What should induce her to exert any art, or judgment, or choice, about the matter? The undisclosed grub, the animal which she is destined not to know, can hardly be the object of a particular affection, if we deny the influence of instinct. There is nothing, therefore, left to her, but that of which her nature seems incapable, an abstract anxiety for the general preservation of the species; a kind of patriotism; a solicitude lest the butterfly race should cease from the creation.

Lastly; the principle of association will not explain the discontinuance of the affection when the young animal is grown up. Association, operating in its usual way, would rather produce a contrary effect. The object would become more necessary, by habits of society: whereas birds and beasts, after a certain time, banish their offspring; disown their acquaintance; seem to have even no knowledge of the objects which so lately engrossed the attention of their minds, and occupied the industry and labour of their bodies. This change, in different animals, takes place at different distances of time from the birth: but the time always corresponds with the ability of the young animal to maintain itself; never anticipates it. In the sparrow tribe, when it is perceived that the young brood can fly, and shift for themselves, then the parents forsake them for ever; and, though they continue to live together, pay them no more attention than they do to other birds in the same flock.* I believe the same thing is true of all gregarious quadrupeds.

In this part of the case, the variety of resources, expedients, and materials, which animals of the same species are said to have recourse to, under different circumstances, and when differently supplied, makes nothing against the doctrine of instincts. The thing which we want to account for, is the propensity. The propensity being there, it is probable enough that it may put the animal upon different actions, according to different exigencies. And this adaptation of resources may look like the effect of art and consideration, rather than of instinct: but still the propensity is instinctive. For instance, suppose what is related of the woodpecker to be true, that in Europe she deposits her eggs in cavities, which she scoops out in the trunks of soft or decayed trees, and in which cavities the eggs lie concealed from the eye, and in some sort safe from the hand of man: but that in the forests of Guinea and the Brazils, which man seldom frequents, the same bird hangs her nest to the twigs of tall trees; thereby placing them out of the reach of *monkeys* and *snakes*; *i. e.* that in each situation she prepares against the danger which she has most occasion to apprehend: suppose, I say, this to be true, and to be alleged, on the part of the bird that builds these nests, as evidence of a reasoning and distinguishing precaution; still the question returns, whence the propensity to build at all?

Nor does parental affection accompany generation by any universal law of animal organization, if such a thing were intelligible. Some animals cherish their progeny with the most ardent fondness, and the most assiduous attention; others entirely neglect them: and this distinction always meets the constitution of the young animal, with respect to its wants and capacities. In many, the parental care extends to the young animal; in others, as in all oviparous fish, it is confined to the egg, and even, as to that, to the disposal of it in its proper element. Also, as there is generation without parental affection, so is there parental instinct, or what exactly resembles it, without generation. In the bee tribe, the grub is nurtured neither by the father nor the mother, but by the neutral bee. Probably the case is the same with ants.

I am not ignorant of the theory which resolves instinct into sensation; which asserts, that what appears to have a view and relation to the future, is the result only of the present disposition of the animal's body, and of pleasure or pain experienced *at the time*. Thus the incubation of eggs is accounted for by the pleasure which the bird is supposed to receive from the pressure of the smooth convex surface of the shells against the abdomen, or by the relief which the mild temperature of the egg may afford to the heat of the lower part of the body, which is observed at this time to be increased beyond its usual state. This present gratification is the only motive with the hen for sitting upon her nest; the hatching of the chickens is, with respect to her, an accidental consequence. The affection of viviparous animals for their young is, in like manner, solved by the relief, and perhaps the pleasure, which they receive from giving suck. The young animal's seeking, in so many instances, the teat of its dam, is ex-

* Goldsmith's Nat. His. vol. iv. p. 214.

plained from its sense of smell, which is attracted by the odour of milk. The salmon's urging its way up the stream of fresh water rivers, is attributed to some gratification or refreshment, which, in this particular state of the fish's body, she receives from the change of element. Now of this theory, it may be said,

First, that of the cases which require solution, there are few to which it can be applied with tolerable probability; that there are none to which it can be applied without strong objections, furnished by the circumstances of the case. The attention of the cow to its calf, and of the ewe to its lamb, appear to be prior to their sucking. The attraction of the calf or lamb to the teat of the dam, is not explained by simply referring it to the sense of smell. What made the scent of milk so agreeable to the lamb, that it should follow it up with its nose, or seek with its mouth the place from which it proceeded? No observation, no experience, no argument, could teach the new dropped animal, that the substance from which the scent issued was the material of its food. It had never tasted milk before its birth. None of the animals which are not designed for that nourishment, ever offer to suck, or to seek out any such food. What is the conclusion, but that the sugescent parts of animals are fitted for their use, and the knowledge of that use put into them?

We assert, secondly, that, even as to the cases in which the hypothesis has the fairest claim to consideration, it does not at all lessen the force of the argument for intention and design. The doctrine of instinct is that of appetencies, *superadded* to the constitution of an animal, for the effectuating of a purpose beneficial to the species. The above stated solution would derive these appetencies from organization; but then this organization is not less specifically, not less precisely, and, therefore, not less evidently, adapted to the same ends, than the appetencies themselves would be upon the old hypothesis. In this way of considering the subject, sensation supplies the place of foresight: but this is the effect of contrivance on the part of the Creator. Let it be allowed, for example, that the hen is induced to brood upon her eggs by the enjoyment or relief, which, in the heated state of her abdomen, she experiences from the pressure of round smooth surfaces, or from the application of a temperate warmth: How comes this extraordinary heat or itching, or call it what you will, which you suppose to be the cause of the bird's inclination, to be felt, just at the time when the inclination itself is wanted; when it tallies so exactly with the internal constitution of the egg, and with the help which that constitution requires in order to bring it to maturity? In my opinion, this solution, if it be accepted as to the fact, ought to increase, rather than otherwise, our admiration of the contrivance. A gardener lighting up his stoves, just when he wants to force his fruit, and when his trees require the heat, gives not a more certain evidence of design. So again; when a male and female sparrow come together, they do not meet to confer upon the expedieney of perpetuating their species. As an abstract proposition, they care not the value of a barley-corn, whether the species be perpetuated, or not: they follow their sensations; and all those consequences ensue, which the wisest counsels could have dictated, which the most solicitous care of futurity, which the most anxious concern for the sparrow world, could have produced. But how do these consequences ensue? The sensations, and the constitution upon which they depend, are as manifestly directed to the purpose which we see fulfilled by them; and the train of intermediate effects, as manifestly laid and planned with a view to that purpose: that is to say, design is as completely evinced by the phenomena, as it would be, even if we suppose the operations to begin, or to be carried on, from what some will allow to be alone properly called instincts, that is, from desires directed to a future end, and having no accomplishment or gratification distinct from the attainment of that end.

In a word; I should say to the patrons of this opinion, Be it so: be it, that those actions of animals which we refer to instinct, are not gone about with any view to their consequences, but that they are attended in the animal with a present gratification, and are pursued for the sake of that gratification alone; what does all this prove, but that the *prospection*, which must be somewhere, is not in the animal, but in the Creator?

In treating of the parental affection in brutes, our business lies rather with the origin of the principle, than with the effects and expressions of it. Writers recount these with pleasure and admiration. The conduct of many kinds of animals towards their young, has escaped no observer, no historian of nature. "How will they caress them," says Derham, "with their affectionate notes; lull and quiet them with their tender parental voice; put food into their mouths; cherish and keep them warm; teach them to pick, and eat, and gather food for themselves; and, in a word, perform the part of so many nurses, deputed by the Sovereign Lord and Preserver of the world, to help such young and shiftless creatures!" Neither ought it, under this head, to be forgotten, how much the instinct *costs* the animal which feels it; how much a bird, for example, gives up, by sitting upon her nest; how repugnant it is to her organization, her habits, and her pleasures. An animal, formed for liberty, submits to confinement, in the very season when every thing invites her abroad: what is more; an animal delighting in motion, made for motion, all whose motions are so easy and so free, hardly a moment, at other times, at rest, is, for many hours of many days together, fixed to her nest, as close as if her limbs were tied down by pins and wires. For my part, I never see a bird in that situation, but I recognise an invisible hand, detaining the contented prisoner from her fields and groves, for the purpose, as the event proves, the most worthy of the sacrifice, the most important, the most beneficial.

But the loss of liberty is not the whole of what the procreant bird suffers. Harvey tells us, that he has often found the female wasted to skin and bone by sitting upon her eggs.

One observation more, and I will dismiss the subject. The *pairing* of birds, and the *non-pairing* of beasts, forms a distinction between the two classes, which shows, that the conjugal instinct is modified with a reference to utility founded on the condition of the offspring. In quadrupeds, the young animal draws its nutriment from the body of the dam. The male parent neither does nor can contribute any part to its sustentation. In the winged race, the young bird is supplied by an importation of food, to procure and bring home which in a sufficient quan-

tity for the demand of a numerous brood, requires the industry of both parents. In this difference, we see a reason for the vagrant instinct of the quadruped, and for the faithful love of the feathered mate.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of Insects.

We are not writing a system of natural history; therefore we have not attended to the classes, into which the subjects of that science are distributed. What we had to observe concerning different species of animals, fell easily, for the most part, within the divisions which the course of our argument led us to adopt. There remain, however, some remarks upon the *insect* tribe, which could not properly be introduced under any of these heads; and which therefore we have collected into a chapter by themselves.

The structure, and the use of the parts, of insects, are less understood than that of quadrupeds and birds, not only by reason of their minuteness, or the minuteness of their parts (for that minuteness we can, in some measure, follow with glasses,) but also by reason of the remoteness of their manners and modes of life from those of larger animals. For instance: insects, under all their varieties of form, are endowed with *antennæ*, which is the name given to those long feelers that rise from each side of the head; but to what common use or want of the insect kind, a provision so universal is subservient, has not yet been ascertained, and it has not been ascertained, because it admits not of a clear, or very probable, comparison, with any organs which we possess ourselves, or with the organs of animals which resemble ourselves in their functions and faculties, or with which we are better acquainted, than we are with insects. We want a ground of analogy. This difficulty stands in our way as to some particulars in the insect constitution, which we might wish to be acquainted with. Nevertheless, there are many contrivances in the bodies of insects, neither dubious in their use, nor obscure in their structure, and most properly mechanical. These form parts of *our* argument.

I. The *clytra*, or scaly wings of the genus of scarabæus or beetle, furnish an example of this kind. The true wing of the animal is a light, transparent membrane, finer than the finest gauze, and not unlike it. It is also, when expanded, in proportion to the size of the animal, very large. In order to protect this delicate structure, and, perhaps, also to preserve it in a due state of suppleness and humidity, a strong, hard case is given to it, in the shape of the horny wing which we call the elytron. When the animal is at rest, the gauze wings lie folded up under this impenetrable shield. When the beetle prepares for flying, he raises the integument, and spreads out his thin membrane to the air. And it cannot be observed without admiration what a tissue of cordage, *i. e.* of muscular tendons, must run in various and complicated, but determinate directions, along this fine surface, in order to enable the animal, either to gather it up into a certain precise form, whenever it desires to place its wings under the shelter which nature hath given to them; or to expand again their folds, when wanted for action.

In some insects, the elytra cover the whole body; in others, half; in others, only a small part of it; but in all, they completely hide and cover the true wings. Also,

Many or most of the beetle species lodge in holes in the earth, environed by hard, rough substances, and have frequently to squeeze their way through narrow passages; in which situation, wings so tender, and so large, could scarcely have escaped injury, without both a firm covering to defend them, and the capacity of collecting themselves up under its protection.

II. Another contrivance, equally mechanical, and equally clear, is the *awl*, or borer, fixed at the tails of various species of flies; and with which they pierce, in some cases, plants; in others, wood; in others, the skin and flesh of animals; in others, the coat of the chrysalis of insects of a different species from their own; and in others, even lime, mortar, and stone. I need not add, that having pierced the substance, they deposit their eggs in the hole. The descriptions which naturalists give of this organ, are such as the following: It is a sharp-pointed instrument, which, in its inactive state, lies concealed in the extremity of the abdomen, and which the animal draws out at pleasure, for the purpose of making a puncture in the leaves, stem, or bark, of the particular plant which is suited to the nourishment of its young. In a sheath, which divides and opens whenever the organ is used, there is enclosed a compact, solid, dendated stem, along which runs a *gutter* or *groove*, by which groove, after the penetration is effected, the egg, assisted, in some cases by a peristaltic motion, passes to its destined lodgement. In the œstrum or gad-fly, the wimble *draws out* like the pieces of a spy-glass; the last piece is armed with three hooks, and is able to bore through the hide of an ox. Can any thing more be necessary to display the mechanism, than to relate the fact?

III. The *stings* of insects, though for a different purpose, are, in their structure, not unlike the piercer. The sharpness to which the point in all of them is wrought; the temper and firmness of the substance of which it is composed; the strength of the muscles by which it is darted out, compared with the smallness and weakness of the insect, and with the soft and friable texture of the rest of the body, are properties of the sting to be noticed, and not a little to be admired. The sting of a *bee* will pierce through a goat-skin glove. It penetrates the human flesh more readily than the finest point of a needle. The *action* of the sting affords an example of the union of chymistry and mechanism, such as, if it be not a proof of contrivance, nothing is. First, as to the chymistry; how highly concentrated must be the *venom*, which, in so small a quantity, can produce such powerful effects! And in the bee we may observe, that this venom is made from *honey*, the only food of the insect, but the last material from which I should have expected that an exalted poison could, by any process or digestion whatsoever, have been prepared. In the next place, with respect to the mechanism, the sting is not a simple, but a compound instrument. The visible sting, though drawn to a point exquisitely sharp, is in strictness only a sheath; for, near to the extremity, may be perceived by the microscope

two minute orifices, from which orifices, in the act of stinging, and, as it should seem, after the point of the main sting has buried itself in the flesh, are launched out two subtile rays, which may be called the true or proper stings, as being those through which the poison is infused into the puncture already made by the exterior sting. I have said that chymistry and mechanism are here *united:* by which observation I meant, that all this machinery would have been useless, *telum imbelle*, if a supply of poison, intense in quality, in proportion to the smallness of the drop, had not been furnished to it by the chymical elaboration which was carried on in the insect's body; and that, on the other hand, the poison, the result of this process, could not have attained its effect, or reached its enemy, if, when it was collected at the extremity of the abdomen, it had not found there a machinery, fitted to conduct it to the external situations in which it was to operate, *viz.* an awl to bore a hole, and a syringe to inject the fluid. Yet these attributes, though combined in their action, are independent in their origin. The venom does not breed the sting; nor does the sting concoct the venom.

IV. The *proboscis*, with which many insects are endowed, comes next in order to be considered. It is a tube attached to the head of the animal. In the bee, it is composed of two pieces, connected by a joint; for, if it were constantly extended, it would be too much exposed to accidental injuries; therefore, in its indolent state, it is doubled up by means of the joint, and in that position lies secure under a scaly penthouse. In many species of the butterfly, the proboscis, when not in use, is coiled up like a watch-spring. In the same bee, the proboscis serves the office of the mouth, the insect having no other: and how much better adapted it is, than a mouth would be, for the collecting of the proper nourishment of the animal, is sufficiently evident. The food of the bee is the nectar of flowers; a drop of syrup, lodged deep in the bottom of the corollæ, in the recesses of the petals, or down the neck of a monopetalous glove. Into these cells the bee thrusts its long narrow pump, through the cavity of which it sucks up this precious fluid, inaccessible to every other approach. It is observable also, that the plant is not the worse for what the bee does to it. The harmless plunderer rifles the sweets, but leaves the flower uninjured. The ringlets of which the proboscis of the bee is composed, the muscles by which it is extended and contracted, form so many microscopical wonders. The agility also with which it is moved, can hardly fail to excite admiration. But it is enough for our purpose to observe, in general, the suitableness of the structure to the use, of the means to the end, and especially the wisdom by which nature has departed from its most general analogy (for, animals being furnished with mouths are such,) when the purpose could be better answered by the deviation.

In some insects, the proboscis, or tongue, or trunk, is shut up in a sharp-pointed sheath: which sheath, being of a much firmer texture than the proboscis itself, as well as sharpened at the point, pierces the substance which contains the food, and then *opens within the wound*, to allow the enclosed tube, through which the juice is extracted, to perform its office. Can any mechanism be plainer than this is; or surpass this?

V. The *metamorphosis* of insects from grubs into moths and flies, is an astonishing process. A hairy caterpillar is transformed into a butterfly. Observe the change. We have four beautiful wings, where there were none before; a tubular proboscis, in the place of a mouth with jaws and teeth; six long legs, instead of fourteen feet. In another case, we see a white, smooth, soft worm, turned into a black, hard, crustaceous beetle, with gauze wings. These, as I said, are astonishing processes, and must require, as it should seem, a proportionably artificial apparatus. The hypothesis which appears to me most probable is, that, in the grub, there exist at the same time three animals, one within another, all nourished by the same digestion, and by a communicating circulation; but in different stages of maturity. The latest discoveries made by naturalists, seem to favour this supposition. The insect already equipped with wings, is described under the membranes both of the worm and nymph. In some species, the proboscis, the antennæ, the limbs, and wings, of the fly, have been observed to be folded up within the body of the caterpillar; and with such nicety as to occupy a small space only under the two first wings. This being so, the outermost animal, which, besides its own proper character, serves as an integument to the other two, being the farthest advanced, dies, as we suppose, and drops off first. The second, the pupa, or chrysalis, then offers itself to observation. This also, in its turn, dies; its dead and brittle husk falls to pieces, and makes way for the appearance of the fly or moth. Now, if this be the case, or indeed whatever explication be adopted, we have a prospective contrivance of the most curious kind: we have organizations *three deep;* yet a vascular system, which supplies nutrition, growth, and life, to all of them together.

VI. Almost all insects are oviparous. Nature keeps her butterflies, moths, and caterpillars, locked up during the winter in their egg state; and we have to admire the various devices to which, if we may so speak, the same nature hath resorted, for the *security* of the egg. Many insects enclose their eggs in a silken web; others cover them with a coat of hair, torn from their own bodies; some glue them together; and others, like the moth of the silkworm, glue them to the leaves upon which they are deposited, that they may not be shaken off by the wind, or washed away by rain: some again make incisions into leaves, and hide an egg in each incision; whilst some envelop their eggs with a soft substance, which forms the first aliment of the young animal: and some again make a hole in the earth, and, having stored it with a quantity of proper food, deposit their eggs in it. In all which we are to observe, that the expedient depends, not so much upon the address of the animal, as upon the physical resources of his constitution.

The art also with which the young insect is *coiled up* in the egg, presents, where it can be examined, a subject of great curiosity. The insect, furnished with all the members which it ought to have, is rolled up into a form which seems to contract it into the least possible space; by which contraction, notwithstanding the smallness of the egg, it has room enough in its apartment, and to spare. This folding of the limbs appears to me to indicate a special direction; for, if it were merely the effect of compression, the collocation of the parts would be more various

than it is. In the same species, I believe, it is always the same.

These observations belong to the whole insect tribe, or to a great part of them. Other observations are limited to a fewer species; but not, perhaps, less important or satisfactory.

I. The organization in the abdomen of the *silk-worm*, or *spider*, whereby these insects form their *thread*, is as incontestably mechanical as a wire-drawer's mill. In the body of the silkworm are two bags, remarkable for their form, position, and use. They wind round the intestine; when drawn out, they are ten inches in length, though the animal itself be only two. Within these bags, is collected a glue; and communicating with the bags, are two paps or outlets, perforated, like a grater, by a number of small holes. The glue or gum, being passed through these minute apertures, forms hairs of almost imperceptible fineness; and these hairs, when joined, compose the silk which we wind off from the cone, in which the silkworm has wrapped itself up: in the spider, the web is formed from this thread. In both cases, the extremity of the thread, by means of its adhesive quality, is first attached by the animal to some external hold; and the end being now fastened to a point, the insect, by turning round its body, or by receding from that point, draws out the thread through the holes above described, by an operation, as hath been observed, exactly similar to the drawing of a wire. The thread, like the wire, is formed by the hole through which it passes. In one respect there is a difference. The wire is the metal unaltered, except in figure. In the animal process, the nature of the substance is somewhat changed, as well as the form; for, as it exists within the insect, it is a soft, clammy gum, or glue. The thread acquires, it is probable, its firmness and tenacity from the action of the air upon its surface, in the moment of exposure; and a thread so fine is almost all surface. This property, however, of the paste, is part of the contrivance.

The mechanism itself consists of the bags, or reservoirs, into which the glue is collected, and of the external holes communicating with these bags: and the action of the machine is seen, in the forming of a thread, as wire is formed, by forcing the material already prepared through holes of proper dimensions. The secretion is an act too subtile for our discernment, except as we perceive it by the produce. But one thing answers to another; the secretory glands to the quality and consistence required in the secreted substance; the bag to its reception: the outlets and orifices are constructed, not merely for relieving the reservoirs of their burden, but for manufacturing the contents into a form and texture, of great external use, or rather indeed of future necessity, to the life and functions of the insect.

II. Bees, under one character or other, have furnished every naturalist with a set of observations. I shall, in this place, confine myself to one; and that is the *relation* which obtains between the wax and the honey. No person, who has inspected a bee-hive, can forbear remarking how commodiously the honey is bestowed in the comb; and, amongst other advantages, how effectually the fermentation of the honey is prevented by distributing it into small cells. The fact is, that when the honey is separated from the comb, and put into jars, it runs into fermentation, with a much less degree of heat than what takes place in a hive. This may be reckoned a nicety: but independently of any nicety in the matter, I would ask, what could the bee do with the honey, if it had not the wax? how, at least, could it store it up for winter? The wax, therefore, answers a purpose with respect to the honey; and the honey constitutes that purpose with respect to the wax. This is the relation between them. But the two substances, though, together, of the greatest use, and, without each other, of little, come from a different origin. The bee finds the honey, but makes the wax. The honey is lodged in the nectaria of flowers, and probably undergoes little alteration; is merely collected: whereas the wax is a ductile, tenacious paste, made out of a dry powder, not simply by kneading it with a liquid, but by a digestive process in the body of the bee. What account can be rendered of facts so circumstanced, but that the animal, being intended to feed upon honey, was, by a peculiar external configuration, enabled to procure it? That, moreover, wanting the honey when it could not be procured at all, it was farther endued with the no less necessary faculty of constructing repositories for its preservation? Which faculty, it is evident, must depend, primarily, upon the capacity of providing suitable materials. Two distinct functions go to make up the ability. First, the power in the bee, with respect to wax, of loading the farina of flowers upon its thighs. Microscopic observers speak of the spoon-shaped appendages with which the thighs of bees are beset for this very purpose; but, in as much as the art and will of the bee may be supposed to be concerned in this operation, there is, secondly, that which doth not rest in art or will, —a digestive faculty which converts the loose powder into a stiff substance. This is a just account of the honey, and the honey-comb; and this account, through every part, carries a creative intelligence along with it.

The *sting* also of the bee has this relation to the honey, that it is necessary for the protection of a treasure which invites so many robbers.

III. Our business is with mechanism. In the *panorpa* tribe of insects, there is a forceps in the tail of the male insect, with which he catches and holds the female. Are a pair of pincers more mechanical than this provision in its structure? or is any structure more clear and certain in its design?

IV. St. Pierre tells us,* that in a fly with six feet, (I do not remember that he describes the species,) the pair next the head and the pair next the tail, have brushes at their extremities, with which the fly dresses, as there may be occasion, the anterior or the posterior part of its body; but that the middle pair have no such brushes, the situation of these legs not admitting of the brushes, if they were there, being converted to the same use. This is a very exact mechanical distinction.

V. If the reader, looking to our distributions of science, wish to contemplate the chymistry, as well as the mechanism, of nature, the insect creation will afford him an example. I refer to the light in the tail of a *glow-worm*. Two points seem to be agreed upon by naturalists concerning it; first, that it is phosphoric; secondly, that its use is to attract the male insect. The only thing to be inquired after, is the singularity, if any such there be, in the natural history of this animal,

* Vol. i. p. 342.

which should render a provision of this kind more necessary for it, than for other insects. That singularity seems to be the difference which subsists between the male and the female; which difference is greater than what we find in any other species of animal whatever. The glow-worm is a female *caterpillar;* the male of which is a *fly;* lively, comparatively small, dissimilar to the female in appearance, probably also as distinguished from her in habits, pursuits, and manners, as he is unlike in form and external constitution. Here then is the adversity of the case. The caterpillar cannot meet her companion in the air. The winged rover disdains the ground. They might never, therefore, be brought together, did not this radiant torch direct the volatile mate to his sedentary female.

In this example, we also see the resources of art anticipated. One grand operation of chymistry is the making of phosphorus: and it was thought an ingenious device, to make phosphoric matches supply the place of lighted tapers. Now this very thing is done in the body of the glow-worm. The phosphorus is not only made, but kindled; and caused to emit a steady and genial beam, for the purpose which is here stated, and which I believe to be the true one.

VI. Nor is the last the only instance that entomology affords, in which our discoveries, or rather our projects, turn out to be imitations of nature. Some years ago, a plan was suggested, of producing propulsion by reaction in this way: by the force of a steam-engine, a stream of water was to be shot out of the stern of a boat; the impulse of which stream upon the water in the river, was to push the boat itself forward; it is, in truth, the principle by which sky-rockets ascend in the air. Of the use or practicability of the plan, I am not speaking; nor is it my concern to praise its ingenuity: but it is certainly a contrivance. Now, if naturalists are to be believed, it is exactly the device which nature has made use of, for the motion of some species of aquatic insects. The larva of the *dragon-fly*, according to Adams, swims by ejecting water from its tail; is driven forward by the reaction of water in the pool upon the current issuing in a direction backward from its body.

VII. Again: Europe has lately been surprised by the elevation of bodies in the air by means of a balloon. The discovery consisted in finding out a manageable substance, which was, bulk for bulk, lighter than air; and the application of the discovery was, to make a body composed of this substance bear up, along with its own weight, some heavier body which was attached to it. This expedient, so new to us, proves to be no other than what the Author of nature has employed in the *gossamer spider*. We frequently see this spider's thread floating in the air, and extended from hedge to hedge across a road or brook of four or five yards width. The animal which forms the thread, has no wings wherewith to fly from one extremity to the other of this line; nor muscles to enable it to spring or dart to so great a distance: yet its Creator hath laid for it a path in the atmosphere; and after this manner. Though the animal itself be heavier than air, the thread which it spins from its bowels is specifically lighter. This is its *balloon*. The spider, left to itself, would drop to the ground; but being tied to its thread, both are supported. We have here a very peculiar provision: and to a contemplative eye it is a gratifying spectacle, to see this insect wafted on her thread, sustained by a levity not her own, and traversing regions, which, if we examined only the body of the animal, might seem to have been forbidden to its nature.

I MUST now crave the reader's permission to introduce into this place, for want of a better, an observation or two upon the tribe of animals, whether belonging to land or water, which are covered by *shells*.

I. The *shells* of *snails* are a wonderful, a mechanical, and, if one might so speak concerning the works of nature, an original contrivance. Other animals have their proper retreats, their hybernacula also, or winter-quarters, but the snail carries these about with him. He travels with his tent; and this tent, though, as was necessary, both light and thin, is completely impervious either to moisture or air. The young snail comes out of its egg with the shell upon its back; and the gradual enlargement which the shell receives, is derived from the slime excreted by the animal's skin. Now the aptness of this excretion to the purpose, its property of hardening into a shell, and the action, whatever it be, of the animal, whereby it avails itself of its gifts, and of the constitution of its glands, (to say nothing of the work being commenced before the animal is born,) are things which can, with no probability, be referred to any other cause than to express design; and that not on the part of the animal alone, in which design, though it might build the house, could not have supplied the material. The will of the animal could not determine the quality of the excretion. Add to which, that the shell of a snail, with its pillar and convolution, is a very artificial fabric; whilst a snail, as it should seem, is the most numb and unprovided of all artificers. In the midst of variety, there is likewise a regularity, which would hardly be expected. In the same species of snail, the number of turns is usually, if not always, the same. The sealing up of the mouth of the shell by the snail, is also well calculated for its warmth and security; but the cerate is not of the same substance with the shell.

II. Much of what has been observed of snails, belongs to *shell-fish*, and their *shells*, particularly to those of the univalve kind; with the addition of two remarks: one of which is upon the great strength and hardness of most of these shells. I do not know whether, the weight being given, art can produce so strong a case as are some of these shells. Which defensive strength suits well with the life of an animal, that has often to sustain the dangers of a stormy element, and a rocky bottom, as well as the attacks of voracious fish. The other remark is, upon the property, in the animal excretion, not only of congealing, but of congealing, or, as a builder would call it, *setting* in water, and into a cretaceous substance, firm and hard. This property is much more extraordinary, and, chymically speaking, more specific, than that of hardening in the air, which may be reckoned a kind of exsiccation, like the drying of clay into bricks.

III. In the *bivalve* order of shell-fish, cockles muscles, oysters, &c. what contrivance can be so simple or so clear, as the insertion, at the back, of a tough tendinous substance, that becomes at once the ligament which binds the two shells

together, and the *hinge* upon which they open and shut?

IV. The shell of a lobster's tail, in its articulations and overlappings, represents the jointed part of a coat of mail; or rather, which I believe to be the truth, a coat of mail is an imitation of a lobster's shell. The same end is to be answered by both; the same properties, therefore, are required in both, namely, hardness and flexibility, a covering which may guard the part without obstructing its motion. For this double purpose, the art of man, expressly exercised upon the subject, has not been able to devise any thing better than what nature presents to his observation. Is not this therefore mechanism, which the mechanic, having a similar purpose in view, adopts. Is the structure of a coat of mail to be referred to art? Is the same structure of the lobster, conducing to the same use, to be referred to any thing less than art?

Some, who may acknowledge the imitation, and assent to the inference which we draw from it, in the instance before us, may be disposed, possibly, to ask, why such imitations are not more frequent than they are, if it be true, as we allege, that the same principle of intelligence, design, and mechanical contrivance was exerted in the formation of natural bodies, as we employ in the making of the various instruments by which our purposes are served? The answers to this question are, first, that it seldom happens, that precisely the same purpose, and no other, is pursued in any work which we compare, of nature and of art; secondly, that it still more seldom happens, that we *can* imitate nature, if we would. Our materials and our workmanship are equally deficient. Springs and wires, and cork and leather, produce a poor substitute for an arm or a hand. In the example which we have selected, I mean a lobster's shell compared with a coat of mail, these difficulties stand less in the way, than in almost any other that can be assigned: and the consequence is, as we have seen, that art gladly borrows from nature her contrivance, and imitates it closely.

But to return to insects. I think it is in this class of animals above all others, especially when we take in the multitude of species which the microscope discovers, that we are struck with what Cicero has called "the *insatiable* variety of nature." There are said to be six thousand species of flies; seven hundred and sixty butterflies; each different from all the rest. (St. Pierre.) The same writer tells us, from his own observation, that thirty-seven species of winged insects, with distinctions well expressed, visited a single strawberry-plant in the course of three weeks.* Ray observed, within the compass of a mile or two of his own house, two hundred kinds of butterflies, nocturnal and diurnal. He likewise, asserts, but, I think, without any grounds of exact computation, that the number of species of insects, reckoning all sorts of them, may not be short of ten thousand.† And in this vast variety of animal forms (for the observation is not confined to insects, though more applicable perhaps to them than to any other class,) we are sometimes led to take notice of the different methods, or rather of the studiously diversified methods, by which one and the same purpose is attained. In the article of breathing, for example, which was to be provided for in some way or other, besides the ordinary varieties of lungs, gills, and breathing holes (for insects in general respire, not by the mouth, but through holes in the sides,) the nymphæ of gnats have an apparatus to raise their *backs* to the top of the water, and so take breath. The hydrocanthari do the like by thrusting their *tails* out of the water.* The maggot of the ernea labra has a long tail, one part sheathed within another (but which it can draw out at pleasure,) with a starry-tuft at the end, by which *tuft*, when expanded upon the surface, the insect both supports itself in the water and draws in the air which is necessary. In the article of natural clothing, we have the skins of animals invested with scales, hair, feathers, mucus, froth; or itself turned into a shell or crust: in the no less necessary article of offence and defence, we have teeth, talons, beaks, horns, stings, prickles, with (the most singular expedient for the same purpose) the power of giving the electric shock, and, as is credibly related of some animals, of driving away their pursuers by an intolerable fœtor, or of blackening the water through which they are pursued. The consideration of these appearances might induce us to believe, that *variety* itself, distinct from every other reason, was a motive in the mind of the Creator, or with the agents of his will.

To this great variety in organized life, the Deity has given, or perhaps there arises out of it, a corresponding variety of animal *appetites*. For the final cause of this, we have not far to seek. Did all animals covet the same element, retreat, or food, it is evident how much fewer could be supplied and accommodated, than what at present live conveniently together, and find a plentiful subsistence. What one nature rejects, another delights in. Food which is nauseous to one tribe of animals, becomes, by that very property which makes it nauseous, an alluring dainty to another tribe. Carrion is a treat to dogs, ravens, vultures, fish. The exhalations of corrupted substances, attract flies by crowds. Maggots revel in putrefaction.

CHAPTER XX.

Of Plants.

I think a designed and studied mechanism to be, in general, more evident in animals than in *plants:* and it is unnecessary to dwell upon a weaker argument, where a stronger is at hand. There are, however, a few observations upon the vegetable kingdom, which lie so directly in our way, that it would be improper to pass by them without notice.

The one great intention of nature in the structure of plants seems to be the perfecting of the *seed;* and, what is part of the same intention, the preserving of it until it be *perfected*. This intention shows itself, in the first place, by the care which appears to be taken, to protect and ripen, by every advantage which can be given to

* Vol. i. p. 3. † Wisd. of God, p. 23.

* Derham, p. 7.

them of situation in the plant, those parts which most immediately contribute to fructification, *viz.* the antheræ, the stamina, and the stigmata. These parts are usually lodged in the centre, the recesses, or the labyrinths of the flower; during their tender and immature state, are shut up in the stalk, or sheltered in the bud: as soon as they have acquired firmness of texture sufficient to bear exposure, and are ready to perform the important office which is assigned to them, they are disclosed to the light and air, by the bursting of the stem, or the expansion of the petals; after which they have, in many cases, by the very form of the flower during its blow, the light and warmth reflected upon them from the concave side of the cup. What is called also the *sleep* of plants, is the leaves or petals disposing themselves in such a manner as to shelter the young stems, buds, or fruit. They turn up, or they fall down, according as this purpose renders either change of position requisite. In the growth of corn, whenever the plant begins to shoot, the two upper leaves of the stalk join together, embrace the ear, and protect it till the pulp has acquired a certain degree of consistency. In some water-plants, the flowering and fecundation are carried on *within* the stem, which afterward opens to let loose the impregnated seed.* The *pea* or papilionaceous tribe, enclose the parts of fructification within a beautiful folding of the internal blossom, sometimes called, from its shape, the boat or keel; itself also protected under a penthouse formed by the external petals. This structure is very artificial; and, what adds to the value of it, though it may diminish the curiosity, very general. It has also this farther advantage (and it is an advantage strictly mechanical,) that all the blossoms turn their *backs* to the wind, whenever the gale blows strong enough to endanger the delicate parts upon which the seed depends. I have observed this a hundred times in a field of peas in blossom. It is an aptitude which results from the figure of the flower, and, as we have said, is strictly mechanical; as much so, as the turning of a weather-board or tin cap upon the top of a chimney. Of the *poppy*, and of many similar species of flowers, the head, while it is growing, hangs down, a rigid curvature in the upper part of the stem giving to it that position; and in that position it is impenetrable by rain or moisture. When the head has acquired its size, and is ready to open, the stalk *erects* itself, for the purpose, as it should seem, of presenting the flower, and with the flower, the instruments of fructification, to the genial influence of the sun's rays. This always struck me as a curious property; and specifically, as well as originally, provided for in the constitution of the plant: for, if the stem be only bent by the weight of the head, how comes it to straighten itself when the head is the heaviest? These instances show the attention of nature to this principal object, the safety and maturation of the parts upon which the seed depends.

In *trees*, especially in those which are natives of colder climates, this point is taken up earlier. Many of these trees (observe in particular the *ash* and the *horse-chesnut*) produce the embryos of the leaves and flowers in one year, and bring them to perfection the following. There is a winter therefore to be gotten over. Now what we are to remark is, how nature has prepared for the trials and severities of that season. These tender embryos are, in the first place, wrapped up with a compactness, which no art can imitate: in which state, they compose what we call the bud. This is not all. The bud itself is enclosed in scales; which scales are formed from the remains of past leaves, and the rudiments of future ones. Neither is this the whole. In the coldest climates, a third preservative is added, by the bud having a *coat* of gum or resin, which, being congealed, resists the strongest frosts. On the approach of warm weather, this gum is softened, and ceases to be a hindrance to the expansion of the leaves and flowers. All this care is part of that system of provisions which has for its object and consummation, the production and perfecting of the seeds.

The SEEDS themselves are packed up in a *capsule*, a vessel composed of coats, which, compared with the rest of the flower, are strong and tough. From this vessel projects a tube, through which tube the farina, or some subtile fecundating effluvium that issues from it, is admitted to the seed. And here also occurs a mechanical variety, accommodated to the different circumstances under which the same purpose is to be accomplished. In flowers which are erect, the pistil is shorter than the stamina; and the pollen, shed from the antheræ into the cup of the flower, is caught, in its descent, by the head of the pistil, called the stigma. But how is this managed when the flowers hang down (as does the crown-imperial, for instance,) and in which position, the farina in its fall, would be carried from the stigma, and not towards it? The relative length of the parts is now inverted. The pistil in these flowers is usually longer, instead of shorter, than the stamina, that its protruding summit may receive the pollen as it drops to the ground. In some cases, (as in the *nigella*,) where the shafts of the pistils or stiles are disproportionably long, they bend down their extremities upon the antheræ, that the necessary approximation may be effected.

But (to pursue this great work in its progress,) the impregnation, to which all this machinery relates, being completed, the other parts of the flower fade and drop off whilst the *gravid seed-vessel*, on the contrary, proceeds to increase its bulk, always to a great, and in some species (in the gourd, for example, and melon,) to a surprising comparative size; assuming in different plants an incalculable variety of forms, but all evidently conducing to the security of the seed. By virtue of this process, so necessary, but so diversified, we have the seed, at length, in stone-fruits and nuts, incased in a strong shell, the shell itself enclosed in a pulp or husk, by which the seed within is, or hath been, fed; or, more generally, (as in grapes, oranges, and the numerous kinds of berries,) plunged overhead in a glutinous syrup, contained within a skin or bladder: at other times (as in apples and pears) imbedded in the heart of a firm fleshy substance; or (as in strawberries) pricked into the surface of a soft pulp.

These and many more varieties exist in what we call *fruits*.* In pulse, and grain, and grasses;

* Philos. Transact. part ii. 1796, p. 502.

* From the conformation of fruits alone, one might be led, even without experience, to suppose, that part of this provision was destined for the utilities of animals. As limited to the plant, the provision itself seems to go beyond its object. The flesh of an apple,

in trees, and shrubs, and flowers; the variety of the seed-vessels is incomputable. We have the seeds (as in the pea tribe) regularly disposed in parchment pods, which, though soft and membranous, completely exclude the wet even in the heaviest rains; the pod also, not seldom (as in the bean,) lined with a fine down; at other times (as in the senna) distended like a blown bladder: or we have the seed enveloped in wool, (as in the cotton-plant,) lodged (as in pines) between the hard and compact scales of a cone, or barricadoed (as in the artichoke and thistle) with spikes and prickles; in mushrooms, placed under a penthouse; in fearns, within slits in the back part of the leaf; or (which is the most general organization of all) we find them covered by strong, close tunicles, and attached to the stem according to an order appropriated to each plant, as is seen in the several kinds of grains and of grasses.

In which enumeration, what we have first to notice is, unity of purpose under variety of expedients. Nothing can be more *single* than the design; more *diversified* than the means. Pellicles, shells, pulps, pods, husks, skin, scales armed with thorns, are all employed in prosecuting the same intention. Secondly; we may observe, that, in all these cases, the purpose is fulfilled within a just and *limited* degree. We can perceive, that if the seeds of plants were more strongly guarded than they are, their greater security would interfere with other uses. Many species of animals would suffer, and many perish, if they could not obtain access to them. The plant would overrun the soil; or the seed be wasted for want of room to sow itself. It is, sometimes, as necessary to destroy particular species of plants, as it is, at other times, to encourage their growth. Here, as in many cases, a balance is to be maintained between opposite uses. The provisions for the preservation of seeds appear to be directed, chiefly against the inconstancy of the elements, or the sweeping destruction of inclement seasons. The depredation of animals, and the injuries of accidental violence, are allowed for in the abundance of the increase. The result is, that out of the many thousand different plants which cover the earth, not a single species, perhaps, has been lost since the creation.

When nature has perfected her seeds, her next care is to disperse them. The seed cannot answer its purpose, whilst it remains confined in the capsule. After the seeds therefore are ripened, the pericarpium opens to let them out; and the opening is not like an accidental bursting, but, for the most part, is according to a certain rule in each plant. What I have always thought very extraordinary; nuts and shells, which we can hardly crack with our teeth, divide and make way for the little tender sprout which proceeds from the kernel. Handling the nut, I could hardly conceive how the plantule was ever to get out of it. There are cases, it is said, in which the seed-vessel by an elastic jerk, at the moment of its explosion, casts the seeds to a distance. We all however know, that many seeds (those of most composite flowers, as of the thistle, dandelion, &c.) are endowed with what are not improperly called *wings;* that is, downy appendages, by which they are enabled to float in the air, and are carried oftentimes by the wind to great distances from the plant which produces them. It is the swelling also of this downy tuft within the seed-vessel, that seems to overcome the resistance of its coats, and to open a passage for the seed to escape.

But the *constitution* of seeds is still more admirable than either their preservation or their dispersion. In the body of the seed of every species of plant, or nearly of every one, provision is made for two grand purposes: first, for the safety of the *germ;* secondly, for the temporary support of the future plant. The sprout, as folded up in the seed, is delicate and brittle beyond any other substance. It cannot be touched without being broken. Yet in beans, peas, grass-seeds, grain, fruits, it is so fenced on all sides, so shut up and protected, that, whilst the seed itself is rudely handled, tossed into sacks, shovelled into heaps, the sacred particle, the miniature plant, remains unhurt. It is wonderful also, how long many kinds of seeds, by the help of their integuments, and perhaps of their oils, stand out against decay. A grain of mustard-seed has been known to lie in the earth for a hundred years; and, as soon as it had acquired a favourable situation, to shoot as vigorously as if just gathered from the plant. Then, as to the second point, the temporary support of the future plant, the matter stands thus. In grain, and pulse, and kernels, and pippins, the germ composes a very small part of the seed. The rest consists of a nutritious substance, from which the sprout draws its aliment for some considerable time after it is put forth; *viz.* until the fibres, shot out from the other end of the seed, are able to imbibe juices from the earth, in a sufficient quantity for its demand. It is owing to this constitution, that we see seeds sprout, and the sprouts make a considerable progress, without any earth at all. It is an economy also, in which we remark a close analogy between the seeds of plants, and the eggs of animals. The same point is provided for, in the same manner in both. In the egg, the residence of the living principle, the cicatrix forms a very minute part of the contents. The white and the white only is expended in the formation of the chicken. The yolk, very little altered or diminished, is wrapped up in the abdomen of the young

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the pulp of an orange, the meat of a plum, the fatness of the olive, appear to be *more* than sufficient for the nourishing of the seed or kernel. The event shows, that this redundancy, if it be one, ministers to the support and gratification of animal natures; and when we observe a provision to be more than sufficient for one purpose, yet wanted for another purpose, it is not unfair to conclude that both purposes were contemplated together. It favours this view of the subject to remark, that fruits are not (which they might have been) ready all together, but that they ripen in succession throughout a great part of the year; some in summer; some in autumn; that some require the slow maturation of the winter, and supply the spring; also that the coldest fruits grow in the hottest places. Cucumbers, pine apples, melons, are the natural produce of warm climates, and contribute greatly, by their coolness, to the refreshment of the inhabitants of those countries.

I will add to this note the following observation communicated to me by Mr. Brinkley:

"The eatable part of the cherry or peach first serves the purposes of perfecting the seed or kernel, by means of vessels passing through the stone, and which are very visible in a peach-stone. After the kernel is perfected, the stone becomes hard, and the vessels cease their functions. But the substance surrounding the stone is not then thrown away as useless. That which was before only an instrument for perfecting the kernel, now receives and retains to itself the whole of the sun's influence, and thereby becomes a grateful food to man. Also what an evident mark of design is the stone protecting the kernel! The intervention of the stone prevents the second use from interfering with the first."

bird, when it quits the shell; and serves for its nourishment, till it have learnt to pick its own food. This perfectly resembles the first nutrition of a plant. In the plant, as well as in the animal, the structure has every character of contrivance belonging to it: in both it breaks the transition from prepared to unprepared aliment; in both, it is prospective and compensatory. In animals which suck, this intermediate nourishment is supplied by a different source.

In all subjects, the most common observations are the best, when it is their truth and strength which have made them common. There are, of this sort, *two* concerning plants, which it falls within our plan to notice. The *first* relates to, what has already been touched upon, their germination. When a grain of corn is cast into the ground, this is the change which takes place. From one end of the grain issues a green sprout; from the other a number of white fibrous threads. How can this be explained? Why not sprouts from both ends? why not fibrous threads from both ends? To what is the difference to be referred, but to design; to the different uses which the parts are thereafter to serve; uses which discover themselves in the sequel of the process? The sprout, or plumule, struggles into the air; and becomes the plant, of which, from the first, it contained the rudiments: the fibres shoot into the earth; and, thereby, both fix the plant to the ground, and collect nourishment from the soil for its support. Now, what is not a little remarkable, the parts issuing from the seed take their respective directions, into whatever position the seed itself happens to be cast. If the seed be thrown into the wrongest possible position; that is, if the ends point in the ground, the reverse of what they ought to do, every thing, nevertheless, goes on right. The sprout, after being pushed down a little way, makes a bend, and turns upwards; the fibres, on the contrary, after shooting at first upwards, turn down. Of this extraordinary vegetable fact, an account has lately been attempted to be given. "The plumule (it is said) is stimulated by the *air* into action, and elongates itself when it is thus most excited; the radicle is stimulated by *moisture*, and elongates itself when *it* is thus most excited. Whence one of these grows upward in quest of its adapted object, and the other downward."* Were this account better verified by experiment than it is, it only shifts the contrivance. It does not disprove the contrivance; it only removes it a little farther back. Who, to use our author's own language, "*adapted* the objects?" Who gave such a quality to these connate parts, as to be susceptible of *different* "stimulation;" as to be "excited" each only by its own element, and precisely by that which the success of the vegetation requires? I say, "which the success of the vegetation requires;" for the toil of the husbandman would have been in vain; his laborious and expensive preparation of the ground in vain; if the event must, after all, depend upon the position in which the scattered seed was sown. Not one seed out of a hundred would fall in a right direction.

Our *second* observation is upon a general property of climbing plants, which is strictly mechanical. In these plants, from each knot or joint, or, as botanists call it, axilla, of the plant, issue, close to each other, two shoots: one bearing the flower and fruit; the other, drawn out into a wire, a long, tapering, spiral tendril, that twists itself round any thing which lies within its reach. Considering, that in this class two purposes are to be provided for, (and together,) fructification and support, the fruitage of the plant, and the sustentation of the stalk, what means could be used more effectual, or, as I have said, more mechanical, than what the structure presents to our eyes? Why, or how, without a view to this double purpose, do two shoots, of such different and appropriate forms, spring from the same joint, from contiguous points of the same stalk? It never happens thus in robust plants, or in trees. "We see not (says Ray) so much as one tree, or shrub, or herb, that hath a firm and strong stem, and that is able to mount up and stand alone without assistance, *furnished with these tendrils.*" Make only so simple a comparison as that between a pea and a bean. Why does the pea put forth tendrils, the bean not; but because the stalk of the pea cannot support itself, the stalk of the bean can? We may add, also, as a circumstance not to be overlooked, that in the pea tribe, these clasps do not make their appearance till they are wanted; till the plant has grown to a height to stand in need of support.

This word "support" suggests to us a reflection upon a property of grasses, of corn, and canes The hollow stems of these classes of plants are set, at certain intervals, with joints. These joints are not found in the trunks of trees, or in the solid stalks of plants. There may be other uses of these joints; but the fact is, and it appears to be, at least, one purpose designed by them, that they *corroborate* the stem; which, by its length and hollowness, would otherwise be too liable to break or bend.

Grasses are Nature's care. With these she clothes the earth; with these she sustains its inhabitants. Cattle feed upon their leaves; birds upon their smaller seeds; men upon the larger: for, few readers need be told that the plants, which produce our bread-corn, belong to this class. In those tribes, which are more generally considered as grasses, their extraordinary means and powers of preservation and increase, their hardiness, their almost unconquerable disposition to spread, their faculties of reviviscence, coincide with the intention of nature concerning them. They thrive under a treatment by which other plants are destroyed. The more their leaves are consumed, the more their roots increase. The more they are trampled upon, the thicker they grow. Many of the seemingly dry and dead leaves of grasses revive, and renew their verdure in the spring. In lofty mountains, where the summer heats are not sufficient to ripen the seeds, grasses abound, which are viviparous, and consequently able to propagate themselves without seed. It is an observation, likewise, which has often been made, that herbivorous animals attach themselves to the leaves of grasses; and, if at liberty in their pastures to range and choose, leave untouched the straws which support the flowers.*

The GENERAL properties of vegetable nature, or properties common to large portions of that kingdom, are almost all which the compass of our argument allows to bring forward. It is impossible

* Darwin's Phytologia, p. 144.

* Withering, Bot. Arr. vol. i p. 28. ed. 2d.

to follow plants into their several species. We may be allowed, however, to single out three or four of these species as worthy of a particular notice, either by some singular mechanism, or by some peculiar provision, or by both.

I. In Dr. Darwin's Botanic Garden (I. 395, note,) is the following account of the *vallisneria*, as it has been observed in the river Rhone.—"They have roots at the bottom of the Rhone. The flowers of the *female plant* float on the surface of the water, and are furnished with an *elastic, spiral stalk*, which extends or contracts as the water rises or falls; this rise or fall, from the torrents which flow into the river, often amounting to many feet in a few hours. The flowers of the *male plant* are produced under water; and, as soon as the fecundating farina is mature, they separate themselves from the plant; rise to the surface; and are wafted by the air, or borne by the currents, to the female flowers." Our attention in this narrative will be directed to two particulars: first, to the mechanism, the "elastic, spiral stalk," which lengthens or contracts itself according as the water rises or falls; secondly, to the provision which is made for bringing the male flower, which is produced *under* water, to the female flower which floats upon the surface.

II. My second example I take from Withering's Arrangement, vol. ii. p. 209. ed. 3. "The *cuscuta europœa* is a parasitical plant. The seed opens, and puts forth a *little spiral body*, which does NOT seek the earth, to take root; but *climbs* in a spiral direction, from right to left, up other plants, from which, by means of vessels, it draws its nourishment." The "little spiral body" proceeding from the seed, is to be compared with the fibres which seeds send out in ordinary cases: and the comparison ought to regard both the form of the threads and the direction. They are straight; this is spiral. They shoot downwards; this points upwards. In the rule, and in the exception, we equally perceive design.

III. A better known parasitical plant is the evergreen shrub, called the *mistletoe*. What we have to remark in it, is a singular instance of *compensation*. No art hath yet made these plants take root in the earth. Here therefore might seem to be a mortal defect in their constitution. Let us examine how this defect is made up to them. The seeds are endued with an adhesive quality, so tenacious, that if they be rubbed upon the smooth bark of almost any tree, they will stick to it. And then what follows? Roots, springing from these seeds, insinuate their fibres into the woody substance of the tree; and the event is, that a mistletoe plant is produced next winter.* Of no other plant do the roots refuse to shoot in the ground; of no other plant do the seeds possess this adhesive, generative quality, when applied to the bark of trees.

IV. Another instance of the *compensatory* system is in the autumnal crocus, or meadow saffron (*colchicum autumnale.*) I have pitied this poor plant a thousand times. Its blossom rises out of the ground in the most forlorn condition possible; without a sheath, a fence, a calyx, or even a leaf to protect it: and that, not in the spring, not to be visited by summer suns, but under all the disadvantages of the declining year. When we come, however, to look more closely into the structure of this plant, we find that instead of its being neglected, Nature has gone out of her course to provide for its security, and to make up to it for all its defects. The seed-vessel, which in other plants is situated within the cup of the flower, or just beneath it, in this plant lies buried ten or twelve inches under ground within the bulbous root. The tube of the flower, which is seldom more than a few tenths of an inch long, in this plant extends down to the root. The stiles in all cases reach the seed-vessel; but it is in this, by an elongation unknown to any other plant. All these contribute to one end. "As this plant blossoms late in the year, and probably, would not have time to ripen its seeds before the access of winter, which would destroy them; Providence has contrived its structure such, that this important office may be performed at a depth in the earth out of reach of the usual effects of frost."* That is to say, in the autumn nothing is done above ground but the business of impregnation; which is an affair between the antheræ and stigmata, and is probably soon over. The maturation of the impregnated seed, which in other plants proceeds within a capsule, exposed together with the rest of the flower to the open air, is here carried on, and during the whole winter, within the heart, as we may say, of the earth, that is, "out of the reach of the usual effects of frost." But then a new difficulty presents itself: seeds, though perfected, are known not to vegetate at this depth in the earth. Our seeds, therefore, though so safely lodged, would, after all, be lost to the purpose for which all seeds are intended. Lest this should be the case, "a second admirable provision is made to raise them above the surface when they are perfected, and to sow them at a proper distance; *viz.* the germ grows up *in the spring*, upon a fruit stalk, accompanied with leaves. The seeds now, in common with those of other plants, have the benefit of the summer, and are sown upon the surface. The order of vegetation externally is this:—The plant produces its flowers in September; its leaves and fruits in the spring following.

V. I give the account of the *dionœa muscipula*, an extraordinary American plant, as some late authors have related it: but whether we be yet enough acquainted with the plant, to bring every part of this account to the test of repeated and familiar observation, I am unable to say. "Its leaves are jointed and furnished with two rows of strong prickles; their surfaces covered with a number of minute glands, which secrete a sweet liquor that allures the approach of flies. When these parts are touched by the legs of flies, the two lobes of the leaf instantly spring up, the rows of prickles lock themselves fast together, and squeeze the unwary animal to death."† Here, under a new model, we recognise the ancient plan of nature, *viz.* the relation of parts and provisions to one another, to a common office, and to the utility of the organized body to which they belong. The attracting syrup, the rows of strong prickles, their position so as to interlock the joints of the leaves; and, what is more than the rest, that singular irritability of their surfaces, by which they close at a touch; all bear a contributory part in producing an effect, connected either with the defence or with the nutrition of the plant.

* Withering, Bot. Arr. vol. i. p. 203. ed. 2d.

* Withering, ubi supra, p. 360.

† Smellie's Phil. of Nat. Hist. vol. i. p. 5.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Elements.

When we come to the elements, we take leave of our mechanics; because we come to those things, of the organization of which, if they be organized, we are confessedly ignorant. This ignorance is implied by their name. To say the truth, our investigations are stopped long before we arrive at this point. But then it is for our comfort to find, that a knowledge of the constitution of the elements is not necessary for us. For instance, as Addison has well observed, "we know *water* sufficiently, when we know how to boil, how to freeze, how to evaporate, how to make it fresh, how to make it run or spout out, in what quantity and direction we please, without knowing what water is." The observation of this excellent writer has more propriety in it now, than it had at the time it was made: for the constitution, and the constituent parts, of water, appear in some measure to have been lately discovered; yet it does not, I think, appear, that we can make any better or greater use of water since the discovery, than we did before it.

We can never think of the elements, without reflecting upon the number of distinct uses which are *consolidated* in the same substance. The *air* supplies the lungs, supports fire, conveys sound, reflects light, diffuses smells, gives rain, wafts ships, bears up birds. Ἐξ ὑδατος τα παντα: *water*, besides maintaining its own inhabitants, is the universal nourisher of plants, and through them of terrestrial animals; is the basis of their juices and fluids; dilutes their food; quenches their thirst, floats their burdens. *Fire* warms, dissolves, enlightens; is the great promoter of vegetation and life, if not necessary to the support of both.

We might enlarge, to almost any length we pleased, upon each of these uses; but it appears to me almost sufficient to state them. The few remarks which I judge it necessary to add, are as follow:

I. Air is essentially different from earth. There appears to be no necessity for an atmosphere's investing our globe; yet it does invest it: and we see how many, how various, and how important, are the purposes which it answers to every order of animated, not to say of organized beings, which are placed upon the terrestrial surface. I think that every one of these uses will be understood upon the first mention of them, except it be that of *reflecting* light, which may be explained thus:—If I had the power of seeing only by means of rays coming directly from the sun, whenever I turned my back upon the luminary, I should find myself in darkness. If I had the power of seeing by reflected light, yet by means only of light reflected from solid masses, these masses would shine indeed, and glisten, but it would be in the dark. The hemisphere, the sky, the world, could only be *illuminated*, as it is illuminated, by the light of the sun being from all sides, and in every direction, reflected to the eye, by particles, as numerous, as thickly scattered, and as widely diffused, as are those of the air.

Another general quality of the atmosphere is the power of evaporating fluids. The adjustment of this quality to our use is seen in its action upon the sea. In the sea, water and salt are mixed together most intimately: yet the atmosphere raises the water and leaves the salt. Pure and fresh as drops of rain descend, they are collected from brine. If evaporation be solution (which seems to be probable,) then the air dissolves the water, and not the salt. Upon whatever it be founded, the distinction is critical; so much so, that when we attempt to imitate the process by art, we must regulate our distillation with great care and nicety, or, together with the water, we get the bitterness, or at least, the distastefulness, of the marine substance: and after all it is owing to this original elective power in the air, that we can effect the separation which we wish, by any art or means whatever.

By evaporation, water is carried up into the air; by the converse of evaporation, it falls down upon the earth. And how does it fall? Not by the clouds being all at once reconverted into water, and descending like a sheet; not in rushing down in columns from a spout; but in moderate drops, as from a colander. Our watering-pots are made to imitate showers of rain. Yet, *a priori*, I should have thought either of the two former methods more likely to have taken place than the last.

By respiration, flame, putrefaction, air is rendered unfit for the support of animal life. By the constant operation of these corrupting principles, the whole atmosphere, if there were no restoring causes, would come at length to be deprived of its necessary degree of purity. Some of these causes seem to have been discovered; and their efficacy ascertained by experiment. And so far as the discovery has proceeded, it opens to us a beautiful and a wonderful economy. *Vegetation* proves to be one of them. A sprig of mint, corked up with a small portion of foul air, placed in the light, renders it again capable of supporting life or flame. Here, therefore, is a constant circulation of benefits maintained between the two great provinces of organized nature. The plant purifies, what the animal has poisoned; in return, the contaminated air is more than ordinarily nutritious to the plant. *Agitation with water* turns out to be another of these restoratives. The foulest air, shaken in a bottle with water for a sufficient length of time, recovers a great degree of its purity. Here then again, allowing for the scale upon which nature works, we see the salutary effects of *storms* and *tempests*. The yesty waves, which confound the heaven and the sea, are doing the very thing which was done in the bottle. Nothing can be of greater importance to the living creation, than the salubrity of their atmosphere. It ought to reconcile us therefore to these agitations of the elements, of which we sometimes deplore the consequences, to know that they tend, powerfully to restore to the air that purity, which so many causes are constantly impairing.

II. In water, what ought not a little to be admired, are those negative qualities which constitute its *purity*. Had it been vinous, or oleaginous, or acid; had the sea been filled, or the rivers flowed, with wine or milk; fish, constituted as they are, must have died; plants, constituted as they are, would have withered; the lives of animals which feed upon plants, must have perished. Its very *insipidity*, which is one of those negative qualities, renders it the best of all menstrua. Having no taste of its own, it becomes the sincere vehicle of every other. Had there been a taste in water, be it what it might, it would have infected every

thing we ate or drank, with an importunate repetition of the same flavour.

Another thing in this element, not less to be admired, is the constant *round* which it travels; and by which, without suffering either adulteration or waste, it is continually offering itself to the wants of the habitable globe. From the sea are exhaled those vapours which form the clouds: these clouds descend in showers, which, penetrating into the crevices of the hills, supply springs: which springs flow in little streams into the valleys; and there uniting, become rivers; which rivers, in return, feed the ocean. So there is an incessant circulation of the same fluid; and not one drop, probably, more or less now than there was at the creation. A particle of water takes its departure from the surface of the sea, in order to fulfil certain important offices to the earth; and, having executed the service which was assigned to it, returns to the bosom which it left.

Some have thought, that we have too much water upon the globe, the sea occupying above three quarters of its whole surface. But the expanse of ocean, immense as it is, may be no more than sufficient to fertilize the earth. Or, independently of this reason, I know not why the sea may not have as good a right to its place as the land. It may proportionably support as many inhabitants; minister to as large an aggregate of enjoyment. The land only affords a habitable surface; the sea is habitable to a great depth.

III. Of fire, we have said that it *dissolves*. The only idea probably which this term raised in the reader's mind, was that of fire melting metals, resins, and some other substances, fluxing ores, running glass, and assisting us in many of our operations, chymical or culinary. Now these are only uses of an occasional kind, and give us a very imperfect notion of what fire does for us. The grand importance of this dissolving power, the great office indeed of fire in the economy of nature, is keeping things in a state of solution, that is to say, in a state of fluidity. Were it not for the presence of heat, or of a certain degree of it, all fluids would be frozen. The ocean itself would be a quarry of ice; universal nature stiff and dead.

We see, therefore, that the elements bear not only a strict relation to the constitution of organized bodies, but a relation to each other. Water could not perform its office to the earth without air; nor exist, as water, without fire.

IV. Of light (whether we regard it as of the same substance with fire, or as a different substance,) it is altogether superfluous to expatiate upon the use. No man disputes it. The observations, therefore, which I shall offer, respect that little which we seem to know of its constitution.

Light travels from the sun at the rate of twelve millions of miles in a minute. Urged by such a velocity, with what *force* must its particles drive against (I will not say the eye, the tenderest of animal substances, but) every substance, animate or inanimate, which stands in its way! It might seem to be a force sufficient to shatter to atoms the hardest bodies.

How then is this effect, the consequence of such prodigious velocity, guarded against? By a proportionable *minuteness* of the particles of which light is composed. It is impossible for the human mind to imagine to itself any thing so small as a particle of light. But this extreme exility, though difficult to conceive, it is easy to prove. A drop of tallow, expended in the wick of a farthing candle, shall send forth rays sufficient to fill a hemisphere of a mile diameter; and to fill it so full of these rays, that an aperture not larger than the pupil of an eye, wherever it be placed within the hemisphere, shall be sure to receive some of them. What floods of light are continually poured from the sun, we cannot estimate; but the immensity of the sphere which is filled with particles even if it reached no farther than the orbit of the earth, we can in some sort compute: and we have reason to believe, that, throughout this whole region, the particles of light lie, in latitude at least, near to one another. The spissitude of the sun's rays at the earth is such, that the number which falls upon a burning-glass of an inch diameter, is sufficient, when concentrated, to set wood on fire.

The tenuity and the velocity of particles of light, as ascertained by separate observations, may be said to be proportioned to each other; both surpassing our utmost stretch of comprehension; but proportioned. And it is this proportion alone which converts a tremendous element into a welcome visitor.

It has been observed to me by a learned friend, as having often struck his mind, that if light had been made by a common artist, it would have been of one uniform *colour;* whereas, by its present composition, we have that variety of colours, which is of such infinite use to us for the distinguishing of objects; which adds so much to the beauty of the earth, and augments the stock of our innocent pleasures.

With which may be joined another reflection, *viz.* that, considering light as compounded of rays of seven different colours, (of which there can be no doubt, because it can be resolved into these rays by simply passing it through a prism,) the constituent parts must be well mixed and blended together, to produce a fluid so clear and colourless, as a beam of light is, when received from the sun.

CHAPTER XXII.

*Astronomy.**

My opinion of Astronomy has always been, that it is *not* the best medium through which to prove the agency of an intelligent Creator; but that, this being proved, it shows, beyond all other sciences, the magnificence of his operations. The mind which is once convinced, it raises to sublimer views of the Deity than any other subject affords; but it is not so well adapted, as some other subjects are, to the purpose of argument. We are destitute of the means of examining the constitution of the heavenly bodies. The very simplicity of their appearance is against them. We see nothing, but bright points, luminous circles, or the phases of spheres reflecting the light which falls upon them. Now we deduce design from relation, aptitude, and correspondence of *parts*. Some degree, therefore, of *complexity* is

* For the articles in this chapter marked with an asterisk, I am indebted to some obliging communications received (through the hands of the Lord Bishop of Elphin) from the Rev. J. Brinkley, M. A. Andrew's Professor of Astronomy in the University of Dublin.

necessary to render a subject fit for this species of argument. But the heavenly bodies do not, except perhaps in the instance of Saturn's ring, present themselves to our observation as compounded of parts at all. This, which may be a perfection in them, is a disadvantage to us, as inquirers after their nature. They do not come within our mechanics.

And what we say of their forms, is true of their *motions*. Their motions are carried on without any sensible intermediate apparatus; whereby we are cut off from one principal ground of argumentation, analogy. We have nothing wherewith to compare them; no invention, no discovery, no operation or resource of art, which, in this respect, resembles them. Even those things which are made to imitate and represent them, such as orreries, planetaria, celestial globes, &c. bear no affinity to them, in the cause and principle by which their motions are actuated. I can assign for this difference a reason of utility, *viz.* a reason why, though the action of *terrestrial* bodies upon each other be, in almost all cases, through the intervention of solid or fluid substances, yet central attraction does not operate in this manner. It was necessary that the intervals between the planetary orbs should be devoid of any *inert* matter either fluid or solid, because such an intervening substance would, by its resistance, destroy those very motions, which attraction is employed to preserve. This may be a final cause of the difference; but still the difference destroys the analogy.

Our ignorance, moreover, of the *sensitive* natures by which other planets are inhabited, necessarily keeps from us the knowledge of numberless utilities, relations, and subserviencies, which we perceive upon our own globe.

After all; the real subject of admiration is, that we understand so much of astronomy as we do. That an animal confined to the surface of one of the planets; bearing a less proportion to it than the smallest microscopic insect does to the plant it lives upon; that this little, busy, inquisitive creature, by the use of senses which were given to it for its domestic necessities, and by means of the assistance of those senses which it has had the art to procure, should have been enabled to observe the whole system of worlds to which its own belongs; the changes of place of the immense globes which compose it; and with such accuracy, as to mark out beforehand the situation in the heavens in which they will be found at any future point of time; and that these bodies, after sailing through regions of void and trackless space, should arrive at the place where they were expected, not within a minute, but within a few seconds of a minute, of the time prefixed and predicted: all this is wonderful, whether we refer our admiration to the constancy of the heavenly motions themselves, or to the perspicacity and precision with which they have been noticed by mankind. Nor is this the whole, nor indeed the chief part, of what astronomy teaches. By bringing reason to bear upon observation, (the acutest reasoning upon the exactest observation.) the astronomer has been able, out of the "mystic dance," and the confusion (for such it is) under which the motions of the heavenly bodies present themselves to the eye of a mere gazer upon the skies, to elicit their order and their real paths.

Our knowledge, therefore, of astronomy is admirable, though imperfect: and, amidst the confessed desiderata and desideranda, which impede our investigation of the wisdom of the Deity in these the grandest of his works, there are to be found, in the phenomena, ascertained circumstances and laws, sufficient to indicate an intellectual agency in three of its principal operations, *viz.* in choosing, in determining, in regulating; in *choosing*, out of a boundless variety of suppositions which were equally possible, that which is beneficial; in *determining*, what, left to itself, had a thousand chances against conveniency, for one in its favour; in *regulating* subjects, as to quantity and degree, which, by their nature, were unlimited with respect to either. It will be our business to offer, under each of these heads, a few instances, such as best admit of a popular explication.

I. Amongst proofs of choice, one is, fixing the source of light and heat in the *centre* of the system. The sun is ignited and luminous; the planets, which move round him, cold and dark. There seems to be no antecedent necessity for this order. The sun might have been an opaque mass; some one, or two, or more, or any, or all, the planets, globes of fire. There is nothing in the nature of the heavenly bodies, which requires that those which are stationary should be on fire, that those which move should be cold: for, in fact, comets are bodies on fire, or at least capable of the most intense heat, yet revolve round a centre: nor does this order obtain between the primary planets and their secondaries, which are all opaque. When we consider, therefore, that the sun is one; that the planets going round it are, at least, seven; that it is indifferent to their nature, which are luminous and which are opaque; and also, in what order, with respect to each other, these two kinds of bodies are disposed; we may judge of the improbability of the present arrangement taking place by chance.

If, by way of accounting for the state in which we find the solar system, it be alleged, (and this is one amongst the guesses of those who reject an intelligent Creator,) that the planets themselves are only cooled or cooling masses, and were once, like the sun, many thousand times hotter than red-hot iron; then it follows, that the sun also himself must be in his progress towards growing cold; which puts an end to the possibility of his having existed, as he is, from eternity. This consequence arises out of the hypothesis with still more certainty, if we make a part of it, what the philosophers who maintain it have usually taught, that the planets were originally masses of matter, struck off in a state of fusion, from the body of the sun by the percussion of a comet, or by a shock from some other cause, with which we are not acquainted: for, if these masses, partaking of the nature and substance of the sun's body, have in process of time lost their heat, that body itself, in time likewise, no matter in how much longer time, must lose its heat also, and therefore be incapable of an eternal duration in the state in which we see it, either for the time to come, or the time past.

The preference of the present to any other mode of distributing luminous and opaque bodies, I take to be evident. It requires more astronomy than I am able to lay before the reader, to show, in its particulars, what would be the effect to the system, of a dark body at the centre, and of one of the planets being luminous: but I think it mani-

fest, without either plates or calculation, first, that supposing the necessary proportion of magnitude between the central and the revolving bodies to be preserved, the ignited planet would not be sufficient to illuminate and warm the rest of the system; secondly, that its light and heat would be imparted to the other planets much more irregularly than light and heat are now received from the sun.

(*) II. Another thing, in which a choice appears to be exercised, and in which, amongst the possibilities out of which the choice was to be made, the number of those which were wrong bore an infinite proportion to the number of those which were right, is in what geometricians call the *axis of rotation*. This matter I will endeavour to explain. The earth, it is well known, is not an exact globe, but an oblate spheroïd, something like an orange. Now the axes of rotation, or the diameters upon which such a body may be made to turn round, are as many as can be drawn through its centre to opposite points upon its whole surface: but of these axes none are *permanent*, except either its shortest diameter, *i. e.* that which passes through the heart of the orange from the place where the stalk is inserted into it, and which is but one; or its longest diameters, at right angles with the former, which must all terminate in the single circumference which goes round the thickest part of the orange. The shortest diameter is that upon which in fact the earth turns, and it is, as the reader sees, what it ought to be, a permanent axis; whereas, had blind chance, had a casual impulse, had a stroke or push at random, set the earth a-spinning, the odds were infinite, but that they had sent it round upon a wrong axis. And what would have been the consequence? The difference between a permanent axis and another axis is this: When a spheroïd in a state of rotatory motion gets upon a permanent axis, it keeps there; it remains steady and faithful to its position; its poles preserve their direction with respect to the plane and to the centre of its orbit: but, whilst it turns upon an axis which is *not* permanent (and the number of those we have seen infinitely exceeds the number of the other,) it is always liable to shift and vacillate from one axis to another, with a corresponding change in the inclination of its poles. Therefore, if a planet once set off revolving upon any other than its shortest, or one of its longest axes, the poles on its surface would keep perpetually changing, and it never would attain a permanent axis of rotation. The effect of this unfixedness and instability would be, that the equatorial parts of the earth might become the polar, or the polar the equatorial; to the utter destruction of plants and animals, which are not capable of interchanging their situations, but are respectively adapted to their own. As to ourselves, instead of rejoicing in our temperate zone, and annually preparing for the moderate vicissitude, or rather the agreeable succession of seasons, which we experience and expect, we might come to be locked up in the ice and darkness of the arctic circle, with bodies neither inured to its rigours, nor provided with shelter or defence against them. Nor would it be much better, if the trepidation of our pole, taking an opposite course, should place us under the heats of a vertical sun. But if it would fare so ill with the human inhabitant, who can live under greater varieties of latitude than any other animal; still more noxious would this translation of climate have proved to life in the rest of the creation; and, most perhaps of all, in plants. The habitable earth, and its beautiful variety, might have been destroyed, by a simple mischance in the axis of rotation.

(*) III. All this, however, proceeds upon a supposition of the earth having been formed at first an oblate spheroïd. There is another supposition; and perhaps our limited information will not enable us to decide between them. The second supposition is, that the earth, being a mixed mass somewhat fluid, took, as it might do, its present form, by the joint action of the mutual gravitation of its parts and its rotatory motion. This, as we have said, is a point in the history of the earth, which our observations are not sufficient to determine. For a very small depth below the surface, (but extremely small, less, perhaps, than an eight-thousandth part, compared with the depth of the centre,) we find vestiges of ancient fluidity. But this fluidity must have gone down many hundred times farther than we can penetrate, to enable the earth to take its present oblate form: and whether any traces of this kind exist to that depth, we are ignorant. Calculations were made a few years ago, of the mean density of the earth, by comparing the force of its attraction with the force of attraction of a rock of granite, the bulk of which could be ascertained: and the upshot of the calculation was, that the earth upon an average, through its whole sphere, has twice the density of granite, or about five times that of water. Therefore it cannot be a hollow shell, as some have formerly supposed; nor can its internal parts be occupied by central fire, or by water. The solid parts must greatly exceed the fluid parts; and the probability is, that it is a solid mass throughout, composed of substances more ponderous the deeper we go. Nevertheless, we may conceive the present face of the earth to have originated from the revolution of a sphere, covered by a surface of a compound mixture; the fluid and solid parts separating, as the surface becomes quiescent. Here then comes in the *moderating* hand of the Creator. If the water had exceeded its present proportion, even but by a trifling quantity compared with the whole globe, all the land would have been covered: had there been much less than there is, there would not have been enough to fertilize the continent. Had the exsiccation been progressive, such as we may suppose to have been produced by an evaporating heat, how came it to stop at the point at which we see it? Why did it not stop sooner? why at all? The mandate of the Deity will account for this; nothing else will.

IV. Of CENTRIPETAL FORCES. By virtue of the simplest law that can be imagined, *viz.* that a body *continues* in the state in which it is, whether of motion or rest; and, if in motion, goes on in the line in which it was proceeding, and with the same velocity, *unless* there be some cause for change: by virtue, I say, of this law, it comes to pass, (what may appear to be a strange consequence,) that cases arise, in which attraction, incessantly drawing a body towards a centre, never brings, nor ever will bring, the body to that centre, but keep it in eternal circulation round it. If it were possible to fire off a cannon-ball with a velocity of five miles in a second, and the resistance of the air could be taken away, the cannon-ball

would for ever wheel round the earth, instead of falling down upon it. This is the principle which sustains the heavenly motions. The Deity, having appointed this law to matter, (than which, as we have said before, no law could be more simple,) has turned it to a wonderful account in constructing planetary systems.

The actuating cause in these systems, is an attraction which varies reciprocally as the square of the distance; that is, at double the distance, has a quarter of the force; at half the distance, four times the strength; and so on. Now, concerning this law of variation, we have three things to observe: First; that attraction, for any thing we know about it, was just as capable of one law of variation, as of another: Secondly; that, out of an infinite number of possible laws, those which were admissible for the purpose of supporting the heavenly motions, lay within certain narrow limits: Thirdly; that of the admissible laws, or those which come within the limits prescribed, the law that actually prevails is the most beneficial. So far as these propositions can be made out, we may be said, I think, to prove *choice* and *regulation:* choice, out of boundless variety; and regulation, of that which, by its own nature, was, in respect of the property regulated, indifferent and indefinite.

I. First then, attraction, for any thing we know about it, was originally indifferent to all laws of variation depending upon change of distance, *i. e.* just as susceptible of one law as of another. It might have been the same at all distances; it might have increased as the distance increased: or it might have diminished with the increase of the distance, yet in ten thousand different proportions from the present; it might have followed no stated law at all. If attraction be what Cotes, with many other Newtonians, thought it to be, a primordial property of matter, not dependent upon, or traceable to, any other material cause; then, by the very nature and definition of a primordial property, it stood indifferent to all laws. If it be the agency of something immaterial; then also, for any thing we know of it, it was indifferent to all laws. If the revolution of bodies round a centre depend upon vortices, neither are these limited to one law more than another.

There is, I know, an account given of attraction, which should seem, in its very cause, to assign to it the law which we find it to observe; and which, therefore, makes that law, a law, not of choice, but of necessity: and it is the account, which ascribes attraction to an *emanation* from the attracting body. It is probable, that the influence of such an emanation will be proportioned to the spissitude of the rays of which it is composed; which spissitude, supposing the rays to issue in right lines on all sides from a point, will be reciprocally as the square of the distance. The mathematics of this solution we do not call in question: the question with us is, whether there be any sufficient reason for believing that attraction is produced by an emanation. For my part, I am totally at a loss to comprehend how particles streaming *from* a centre should draw a body *towards* it. The impulse, if impulse it be, is all the other way. Nor shall we find less difficulty in conceiving a conflux of particles, incessantly flowing to a centre, and carrying down all bodies along with it, that centre also itself being in a state of rapid motion through absolute space; for, by what source is the stream fed, or what becomes of the accumulation? Add to which, that it seems to imply a contrariety of properties, to suppose an ethereal fluid to *act*, but not to *resist;* powerful enough to carry down bodies with great force towards a centre, yet, inconsistently with the nature of inert matter, powerless and perfectly yielding with respect to the motions which result from the projectile impulse. By calculations drawn from ancient notices of eclipses of the moon, we can prove that, if such a fluid exist at all, its resistance has had no sensible effect upon the moon's motion for two thousand five hundred years. The truth is, that, except this one circumstance of the variation of the attracting force at different distances agreeing with the variation of the spissitude, there is no reason whatever to support the hypothesis of an emanation; and, as it seems to me, almost insuperable reasons against it.

(*) II. Our second proposition is, that, whilst the possible laws of variation were infinite, the *admissible* laws, or the laws compatible with the preservation of the system, lie within narrow limits. If the attracting force had varied according to any *direct* law of the distance, let it have been what it would, great destruction and confusion would have taken place. The direct simple proportion of the distance would, it is true, have produced an ellipse: but the perturbing forces would have acted with so much advantage, as to be continually changing the dimensions of the ellipse, in a manner inconsistent with our terrestrial creation. For instance; if the planet Saturn, so large and so remote, had attracted the Earth, both in proportion to the quantity of matter contained in it, which it does; and also in any proportion to its distance, *i. e.* if it had pulled the harder for being the farther off (instead of the reverse of it,) it would have dragged out of its course the globe which we inhabit, and have perplexed its motions, to a degree incompatible with our security, our enjoyments, and probably our existence. Of the *inrerse* laws, if the centripetal force had changed as the cube of the distance, or in any higher proportion, that is, (for I speak to the unlearned,) if, at double the distance, the attractive force had been diminished to an eighth part, or to less than that, the consequence would have been, that the planets, if they once began to approach the sun, would have fallen into his body; if they once, though by ever so little, increased their distance from the centre, would for ever have receded from it. The laws therefore of attraction, by which a system of revolving bodies could be upholden in their motions, lie within narrow limits, compared with the possible laws. I much underrate the restriction, when I say that, in a scale of a mile, they are confined to an inch. All direct ratios of the distance are excluded, on account of danger from perturbing forces: all reciprocal ratios, except what lie beneath the cube of the distance, by the demonstrable consequence, that every the least change of distance would, under the operation of such laws, have been fatal to the repose and order of the system. We do not know, that is, we seldom reflect, how interested we are in this matter. Small irregularities may be endured; but, changes within these limits being allowed for, the permanency of our ellipse is a question of life and death to our whole sensitive world.

(*) III. That the subsisting law of attraction falls within the limits which utility requires, when

these limits bear so small a proportion to the range of possibilities upon which chance might equally have cast it, is not, with any appearance of reason, to be accounted for by any other cause than a regulation proceeding from a designing mind. But our next proposition carries the matter somewhat farther. We say, in the third place, that, out of the different laws which lie within the limits of admissible laws, the *best* is made choice of; that there are advantages in this particular law which cannot be demonstrated to belong to any other law; and, concerning some of which, it can be demonstrated that they do not belong to any other.

(*) 1. Whilst this law prevails between each particle of matter, the *united* attraction of a sphere, composed of that matter, observes the same law. This property of the law is necessary, to render it applicable to a system composed of spheres, but it is a property which belongs to no other law of attraction that is admissible. The law of variation of the united attraction is in no other case the same as the law of attraction of each particle, one case excepted, and that is of the attraction varying directly as the distance; the inconveniency of which law, in other respects, we have already noticed.

We may follow this regulation somewhat farther, and still more strikingly perceive that it proceeded from a designing mind. A law both admissible and convenient was requisite. In what way is the law of the attracting globes obtained? Astronomical observations and terrestrial experiments show that the attraction of the globes of the system is made up of the attraction of their parts; the attraction of each globe being compounded of the attractions of its parts. Now the admissible and convenient law which exists, could not be obtained in a system of bodies gravitating by the united gravitation of their parts, unless each particle of matter were attracted by a force varying by one particular law, *viz.* varying inversely as the square of the distance: for, if the action of the particles be according to any other law whatever, the admissible and convenient law, which is adopted, could not be obtained. Here then are clearly shown regulation and design. A law both admissible and convenient was to be obtained: the mode chosen for obtaining that law was by making *each* particle of matter act. After this choice was made, then farther attention was to be given to each particle of matter, and one, and one only, particular law of action to be assigned to it. No other law would have answered the purpose intended.

(*) 2. All systems must be liable to *perturbations*. And, therefore, to guard against these perturbations, or rather to guard against their running to destructive lengths, is perhaps the strongest evidence of care and foresight that can be given. Now, we are able to demonstrate of our law of attraction, what can be demonstrated of no other, and what qualifies the dangers which arise from cross but unavoidable influences; that the action of the parts of our system upon one another will not cause permanently increasing irregularities, but merely periodical or vibratory ones; that is, they will come to a limit, and then go back again. This we can demonstrate only of a system, in which the following properties concur, *viz.* that the force shall be inversely as the square of the distance; the masses of the revolving bodies small, compared with that of the body at the centre; the orbits not much inclined to one another; and their eccentricity little. In such a system, the grand points are secure. The mean distances and periodic times, upon which depend our temperature, and the regularity of our year, are constant. The eccentricities, it is true, will still vary; but so slowly, and to so small an extent, as to produce no inconveniency from fluctuation of temperature and season. The same as to the obliquity of the planes of the orbits. For instance, the inclination of the ecliptic to the equator will never change above two degrees (out of ninety,) and that will require many thousand years in performing.

It has been rightly also remarked, that, if the great planets, Jupiter and Saturn, had moved in lower spheres, their influences would have had much more effect as to disturbing the planetary motions, than they now have. While they revolve at so great distances from the rest, they act almost equally on the sun and on the inferior planets; which has nearly the same consequences as not acting at all upon either.

If it be said that the planets might have been sent round the sun in exact circles, in which case, no change of distance from the centre taking place, the law of variation of the attracting power would have never come in question, one law would have served as well as another; an answer to the scheme may be drawn from the consideration of these same perturbing forces. The system retaining in other respects its present constitution, though the planets had been at first sent round in exact circular orbits, they could not have kept them; and if the law of attraction had not been what it is, or, at least, if the prevailing law had transgressed the limits above assigned, every evagation would have been fatal: the planet once drawn, as drawn it necessarily must have been, out of its course, would have wandered in endless error.

(*) V. What we have seen in the law of the centripetal force, *viz.* a choice guided by views of utility, and a choice of one law out of thousands which might equally have taken place, we see no less in the *figures* of the planetary orbits. It was not enough to fix the law of the centripetal force, though by the wisest choice; for, even under that law, it was still competent to the planets to have moved in paths possessing so great a degree of eccentricity, as, in the course of every revolution, to be brought very near to the sun, and carried away to immense distances from him. The comets actually move in orbits of this sort: and, had the planets done so, instead of going round in orbits nearly circular, the change from one extremity of temperature to another must, in ours at least, have destroyed every animal and plant upon its surface. Now, the distance from the centre at which a planet sets off, and the absolute force of attraction at that distance, being fixed, the figure of its orbit, its being a circle, or nearer to, or farther off from a circle, *viz.* a rounder or a longer oval, depends upon two things, the velocity with, and the direction in which, the planet is projected. And these, in order to produce a right result, must be both brought within certain narrow limits. One, and only one, velocity, united with one, and only one, direction, will produce a perfect circle. And the velocity must be near to this velocity, and the direction also near to this direction, to produce orbits, such as the planetary

orbits are, nearly circular; that is, ellipses with small eccentricities. The velocity and the direction must *both* be right. If the velocity be wrong, no direction will cure the error; if the direction be in any considerable degree obliique, no velocity will produce the orbit required. Take for example the attraction of gravity at the surface of the earth. The force of that attraction being what it is, out of all the degrees of velocity, swift and slow, with which a ball might be shot off, none would answer the purpose of which we are speaking, but what was nearly that of five miles in a second. If it were less than that, the body would not get round at all, but would come to the ground; if it were in any considerable degree more than that, the body would take one of those eccentric courses, these long ellipses, of which we have noticed the inconveniency. If the velocity reached the rate of seven miles in a second, or went beyond that, the ball would fly off from the earth, and never be heard of more. In like manner with respect to the *direction;* out of the innumerable angles in which the ball might be sent off (I mean angles formed with a line drawn to the centre,) none would serve but what was nearly a right one: out of the various directions in which the cannon might be pointed, upwards and downwards, every one would fail, but what was exactly or nearly horizontal. The same thing holds true of the planets: of our own amongst the rest. We are entitled therefore to ask, and to urge the question, Why did the projectile velocity and projectile direction of the earth happen to be nearly those which would retain it in a *circular* form? Why not one of the infinite number of velocities, one of the infinite number of directions, which would have made it approach much nearer to, or recede much farther from, the sun?

The planets going round, all in the same direction, and all nearly in the same plane, afforded to Buffon a ground for asserting that they had all been shivered from the sun by the same stroke of a comet, and by that stroke projected into their present orbits. Now, beside that this is to attribute to chance the fortunate concurrence of velocity and direction which we have been here noticing, the hypothesis, as I apprehend, is inconsistent with the physical laws by which the heavenly motions are governed. If the planets were struck off from the surface of the sun, they would return to the surface of the sun again. Nor will this difficulty be got rid of, by supposing that the same violent blow which shattered the sun's surface, and separated large fragments from it, pushed the sun himself out of his place; for, the consequence of this would be, that the sun and system of shattered fragments would have a progressive motion, which, indeed, may possibly be the case with our system; but then each fragment would, in every revolution, return to the surface of the sun again. The hypothesis is also contradicted, by the vast difference which subsists between the *diameters* of the planetary orbits. The distance of Saturn from the sun (to say nothing of the Georgium Sidus) is nearly five-and-twenty times that of Mercury; a disparity, which it seems impossible to reconcile with Buffon's scheme. Bodies starting from the same place, with whatever difference of direction or velocity they set off, could not have been found at these different distances from the centre, still retaining their nearly circular orbits. They must have been carried to their proper distances, before they were projected.*

To conclude: in astronomy, the great thing is to raise the imagination to the subject, and that oftentimes in opposition to the impression made upon the senses. An illusion, for example, must be gotten over, arising from the distance at which we view the heavenly bodies, *viz.* the apparent *slowness* of their motions. The moon shall take some hours in getting half a yard from a star which it touched. A motion so deliberate, we may think easily guided. But what is the fact? The moon, in fact, is, all this while, driving through the heavens, at the rate of considerably more than two thousand miles in an hour; which is more than double of that with which a ball is shot off from the mouth of a cannon. Yet is this prodigious rapidity as much under government, as if the planet proceeded ever so slowly, or were conducted in its course inch by inch. It is also difficult to bring the imagination to conceive (what yet, to judge tolerably of the matter, it is necessary to conceive) how *loose*, if we may so express it, the heavenly bodies are. Enormous globes, held by nothing, confined by nothing, are turned into free and boundless space, each to seek its course by the virtue of an invisible principle; but a principle, one, common, and the same in all; and ascertainable. To preserve such bodies from being lost, from running together in heaps, from hindering and distracting one another's motions in a degree inconsistent with any continuing order; *h. e.* to cause them to form planetary systems, systems that, when formed, can be upheld, and most especially, systems accommodated to the organized and sensitive natures which the planets sustain, as we know to be the case, where alone we can know what the case is, upon our earth: all this requires an intelligent interposition, because it can be demonstrated concerning it, that it requires an adjustment of force, distance, direction, and velocity, out of the reach of chance to have produced; an adjustment, in its view to utility, similar to that which we see in ten thousand subjects of nature which are nearer to us, but in power, and in the extent of space through which that power is exerted, stupendous.

But many of the heavenly bodies, as the sun and fixed stars, are *stationary*. Their rest must be the effect of an absence or of an equilibrium of attractions. It proves also that a projectile impulse was originally given to some of the heavenly bodies, and not to others. But farther; if attraction act at all distances, there can only be one quiescent centre of gravity in the universe: and all bodies whatever must be approaching this centre, or revolving round it. According to the

* If we suppose the matter of the system to be accumulated in the centre by its gravity, *no* mechanical principles, with the assistance of this power of gravity, could separate the vast mass into such parts as the sun and planets; and, after carrying them to their different distances, project them in their several directions, preserving still the quality of action, and reaction, or the state of the centre of gravity of the system. Such an exquisite structure of things could only arise from the contrivance and powerful influences of an intelligent, free, and most potent agent. The same powers, therefore, which, at present, govern the material universe, and conduct its various motions, are *very different* from those which were necessary to have produced it from nothing, or to have disposed it in the admirable form in which it now proceeds."—*Maclaurin's Account of Newton's Philos.* p. 407. ed. 3.

first of these supposltions, if the duration of the world had been long enough to allow of it, all its parts, all the great bodies of which it is composed, must have been gathered together in a heap round this point. No changes however which have been observed, afford us the smallest reason for believing, that either the one supposition or the other is true; and then it will follow, that attraction itself is controlled or suspended by a superior agent; that there is a power above the highest of the powers of material nature; a will which restrains and circumscribes the operations of the most extensive.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the Personality of the Deity.

Contrivance, if established, appears to me to prove every thing which we wish to prove. Amongst other things, it proves the *personality* of the Deity, as distinguished from what is sometimes called nature, sometimes called a principle: which terms, in the mouths of those who use them philosophically, seem to be intended, to admit and to express an efficacy, but to exclude and to deny a personal agent. Now that which can contrive, which can design, must be a person. These capacities constitute personality, for they imply consciousness and thought. They require that which can perceive an end or purpose; as well as the power of providing means, and of directing them to their end.† They require a centre in which perceptions unite, and from which volitions flow; which is mind. The acts of a mind prove the existence of a mind; and in whatever a mind resides, is a person. The seat of intellect is a person. We have no authority to limit the properties of mind to any corporeal form, or to any particular circumscription of space. These properties subsist, in created nature, under a great variety of sensible forms. Also every animated being has its *sensorium*; that is, a certain portion of space, within which perception and volition are exerted. This sphere may be enlarged to an indefinite extent; may comprehend the universe; and, being so imagined, may serve to furnish us with as good a notion, as we are capable of forming, of the *immensity* of the Divine Nature, *i. e.* of a Being, infinite, as well in essence as in power; yet nevertheless a person.

"No man hath seen God at any time." And this, I believe, makes the great difficulty. Now it is a difficulty which chiefly arises from our not duly estimating the state of our faculties. The Deity, it is true, is the object of none of our senses: but reflect what limited capacities animal senses are. Many animals seem to have but one sense, or perhaps two at the most; touch and taste. Ought such an animal to conclude against the existence of odours, sounds, and colours? To another species is given the sense of smelling. This is an advance in the knowledge of the powers and properties of nature: but, if this favoured animal should infer from its superiority over the class last described, that it perceived every thing which was perceptible in nature, it is known to us, though perhaps not suspected by the animal itself, that it proceeded upon a false and presumptuous estimate of its faculties. To another is added the sense of hearing; which lets in a class of sensations entirely unconceived by the animal before spoken of; not only distinct, but remote from any which *it* had ever experienced, and greatly superior to them. Yet this last animal has no more ground for believing, that its senses comprehend all things, and all properties of things which exist, than might have been claimed by the tribes of animals beneath it; for we know, that it is still possible to possess another sense, that of sight, which shall disclose to the percipient a new world. This fifth sense makes the animal what the human animal is; but to infer, that possibility stops here; that either this fifth sense is the last sense, or that the five comprehend all existence; is just as unwarrantable a conclusion, as that which might have been made by any of the different species which possessed fewer, or even by that, if such there be, which possessed only one. The conclusion of the one-sense animal, and the conclusion of the five-sense animal, stand upon the same authority. There may be more and other senses than those which we have. There may be senses suited to the perception of the powers, properties, and substance, of spirits. These may belong to higher orders of rational agents; for there is not the smallest reason for supposing that we are the highest, or that the scale of creation stops with us.

The great *energies* of nature are known to us only by their effects. The substances which produce them, are as much concealed from our sense as the divine essence itself. *Gravitation*, though constantly present, though constantly exerting its influence, though every where around us, near us, and within us; though diffused throughout all space, and penetrating the texture of all bodies with which we are acquainted, depends, if upon a fluid, upon a fluid which, though both powerful and universal in its operation, is no object of sense to us; if upon any other kind of substance or action, upon a substance and action, from which *we* receive no distinguishable impressions. Is it then to be wondered at, that it should, in some measure, be the same with the Divine nature?

Of this however we are certain, that whatever the Deity be, neither the *universe*, nor any part of it which we see, can be He. The universe itself is merely a collective name: its parts are all which are real; or which are *things*. Now inert matter is out of the question: and organized substances include marks of contrivance. But whatever includes marks of contrivance, whatever, in its constitution, testifies design, necessarily carries us to something beyond itself, to some other being, to a designer prior to, and out of, itself. No animal for instance, can have contrived its own limbs and senses; can have been the author to itself of

* It must here however be stated, that many astronomers deny that any of the heavenly bodies are absolutely stationary. Some of the brightest of the fixed stars have certainly small motions; and of the rest the distance is too great, and the intervals of our observation too short, to enable us to pronounce with certainty that they may not have the same. The motions in the fixed stars which have been observed, are considered either as proper to each of them, or as compounded of the motion of our system, and of motions proper to each star. By a comparison of these motions, a motion in our system is supposed to be discovered. By continuing this analogy to other, and to all systems, it is possible to suppose that attraction is unlimited, and that the whole material universe is revolving round some fixed point within its containing sphere of space.

† Priestley's Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever, p. 153. ed. 2.

the design with which they were constructed. That supposition involves all the absurdity of self-creation, *i. e.* of acting without existing. Nothing can be God, which is ordered by a wisdom and a will, which itself is void of; which is indebted for any of its properties to contrivance *ab extra*. The *not* having that in his nature which requires the exertion of another prior being (which property is sometimes called self-sufficiency, and sometimes self-comprehension,) appertains to the Deity, as his essential distinction, and removes his nature from that of all things which we see. Which consideration contains the answer to a question that has sometimes been asked, namely, Why, since something or other must have existed from eternity, may not the present universe be that something? The contrivance perceived in it, proves that to be impossible. Nothing contrived, can, in a strict and proper sense, be eternal, forasmuch as the contriver must have existed before the contrivance.

Wherever we see marks of contrivance, we are led for its cause to an *intelligent* author. And this transition of the understanding is founded upon uniform experience. We see intelligence constantly contriving; that is, we see intelligence constantly producing effects, marked and distinguished by certain properties; not certain particular properties, but by a kind and class of properties, such as relation to an end, relation of parts to one another, and to a common purpose. We see, wherever we are witnesses to the actual formation of things, nothing except intelligence producing effects so marked and distinguished. Furnished with this experience, we view the productions of nature. We observe *them* also marked and distinguished in the same manner. We wish to account for their origin. Our experience suggests a cause perfectly adequate to this account. No experience, no single instance or example, can be offered in favour of any other. In this cause therefore we ought to rest; in this cause the common sense of mankind has, in fact, rested, because it agrees with that, which, in all cases, is the foundation of knowledge,—the undeviating course of their experience. The reasoning is the same as that, by which we conclude any ancient appearances to have been the effects of volcanoes or inundations; namely, because they resemble the effects which fire and water produce before our eyes; and because we have never known these effects to result from any other operation. And this resemblance may subsist in so many circumstances, as not to leave us under the smallest doubt in forming our opinion. Men are not deceived by this reasoning: for whenever it happens, as it sometimes does happen, that the truth comes to be known by direct information, it turns out to be what was expected. In like manner, and upon the same foundation, (which in truth is that of experience,) we conclude that the works of nature proceed from intelligence and design; because in the properties of relation to a purpose, subserviency to a use, they resemble what intelligence and design are constantly producing, and what nothing except intelligence and design ever produce at all. Of every argument, which would raise a question as to the safety of this reasoning, it may be observed, that if such argument be listened to, it leads to the inference, not only that the present order of nature is insufficient to prove the existence of an intelligent Creator, but that no imaginable order would be sufficient to prove it; that *no* contrivance, were it ever so mechanical, ever so precise, ever so clear, ever so perfectly like those which we ourselves employ, would support this conclusion. A doctrine, to which, I conceive, no sound mind can assent.

The force however of the reasoning is sometimes sunk by our taking up with mere names. We have already noticed,* and we must here notice again, the misapplication of the term "law," and the mistake concerning the idea which that term expresses in physics, whenever such idea is made to take the place of power, and still more of an intelligent power, and, as such, to be assigned for the cause of any thing, or of any property of any thing, that exists. This is what we are secretly apt to do, when we speak of organized bodies (plants for instance, or animals,) owing their production, their form, their growth, their qualities, their beauty, their use, to any law or laws of nature; and when we are contented to sit down with that answer to our inquiries concerning them. I say once more, that it is a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient operative cause of any thing. A law presupposes an agent, for it is only the mode according to which an agent proceeds; it implies a power, for it is the order according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the "law" does nothing; is nothing.

What has been said concerning "law," holds true of *mechanism*. Mechanism is not itself power. Mechanism, without power, can do nothing. Let a watch be contrived and constructed ever so ingeniously; be its parts ever so many, ever so complicated, ever so finely wrought or artificially put together, it cannot go without a weight or spring, *i. e.* without a force independent of, and ulterior to, its mechanism. The spring acting at the centre, will produce different motions and different results, according to the variety of the intermediate mechanism. One and the self-same spring, acting in one and the same manner, *viz.* by simply expanding itself, may be the cause of a hundred different and all useful movements, if a hundred different and well-devised sets of wheels be placed between it and the final effect; *e. g.* may point out the hour of the day, the day of the month, the age of the moon, the position of the planets, the cycle of the years, and many other serviceable notices; and these movements may fulfil their purposes with more or less perfection, according as the mechanism is better or worse contrived, or better or worse executed, or in a better or worse state of repair: *but in all cases, it is necessary that the spring act at the centre.* The course of our reasoning upon such a subject would be this: By inspecting the watch, even when standing still, we get a proof of contrivance, and of a contriving mind, having been employed about it. In the form and obvious relation of its parts, we see enough to convince us of this. If we pull the works in pieces, for the purpose of a closer examination, we are still more fully convinced. But, when we see the watch *going*, we see proof of another point, *viz.* that there is a power somewhere, and somehow or other, applied to it; a power in action;—that there is more in the subject than the mere wheels

* Ch. I. sect. vii.

of the machine;—that there is a secret spring, or a gravitating plummet;—in a word, that there is force, and energy, as well as mechanism.

So then, the watch in motion establishes to the observer two conclusions: One; that thought, contrivance, and design have been employed in the forming, proportioning, and arranging of its parts; and that whoever or wherever he be, or were, such a contriver there is, or was: The other; that force or power, distinct from mechanism, is, at this present time, acting upon it. If I saw a handmill even at rest, I should see contrivance: but if I saw it grinding, I should be assured that a hand was at the windlass, though in another room. It is the same in nature. In the works of nature we trace mechanism; and this alone proves contrivance: but living, active, moving, productive nature, proves also the exertion of a power at the centre; for, wherever the power resides may be denominated the centre.

The intervention and disposition of what are called "*second causes,*" fall under the same observation. This disposition is or is not mechanism, according as we can or cannot trace it by our senses and means of examination. That is all the difference there is; and it is a difference which respects our faculties, not the things themselves. Now where the order of second causes is mechanical, what is here said of mechanism strictly applies to it. But it would be always mechanism (natural chymistry, for instance, would be mechanism,) if our senses were acute enough to descry it. Neither mechanism, therefore, in the works of nature, nor the intervention of what are called second causes, (for I think that they are the same thing,) excuses the necessity of an agent distinct from both.

If, in tracing these causes, it be said, that we find certain general properties of matter which have nothing in them that bespeaks intelligence, I answer, that, still, the *managing* of these properties, the pointing and directing them to the uses which we see made of them, demands intelligence in the highest degree. For example: suppose animal secretions to be elective attractions, and that such and such attractions universally belong to such and such substances; in all which there is no intellect concerned; still the choice and collocation of these substances, the fixing upon right substances, and disposing them in right places, must be an act of intelligence. What mischief would follow, were there a single transposition of the secretory organs; a single mistake in arranging the glands which compose them!

There may be many second causes, and many courses of second causes, one behind another, between what we observe of nature, and the Deity: but there must be intelligence somewhere; there must be more in nature than what we see; and, amongst the things unseen, there must be an intelligent, designing author. The philosopher beholds with astonishment the production of things around him. Unconscious particles of matter take their stations, and severally range themselves in an order, so as to become collectively plants or animals, *i. e.* organized bodies, with parts bearing strict and evident relation to one another, and to the utility of the whole: and it should seem that these particles could not move in any other way than as they do; for they testify not the smallest sign of choice, or liberty, or discretion. There may be particular intelligent beings, guiding these motions in each case: or they may be the result of trains of mechanical dispositions, fixed beforehand by an intelligent appointment, and kept in action by a power at the centre. But, in either case, there must be intelligence.

The minds of most men are fond of what they call a *principle*, and of the appearance of simplicity, in accounting for phenomena. Yet this principle, this simplicity, resides merely in the *name;* which name, after all, comprises, perhaps, under it a diversified, multifarious, or progressive operation, distinguishable into parts. The power in organized bodies, of producing bodies like themselves, is one of these principles. Give a philosopher this, and he can get on. But he does not reflect, what this mode of production, this principle (if such he choose to call it) requires; how much it presupposes; what an apparatus of instruments, some of which are strictly mechanical, is necessary to its success; what a train it includes of operations and changes, one succeeding another, one related to another, one ministering to another; all advancing, by intermediate, and, frequently, by sensible steps to their ultimate result! Yet, because the whole of this complicated action is wrapped-up in a single term, *generation*, we are to set it down as an elementary principle; and to suppose, that when we have resolved the things which we see in this principle, we have sufficiently accounted for their origin, without the necessity of a designing, intelligent Creator. The truth is, generation is not a principle but a *process*. We might as well call the casting of metals a principle; we might, so far as appears to me, as well call spinning and weaving principles: and, then, referring the texture of cloths, the fabric of muslins and calicoes, the patterns of diapers and damasks, to these, as principles, pretend to dispense with intention, thought, and contrivance, on the part of the artist; or to dispense, indeed, with the necessity of any artist at all, either in the manufacturing of the article, or in the fabrication of the machinery by which the manufacture was carried on.

And, after all, how, or in what sense, is it true, that animals produce their *like?* A butterfly, with a proboscis instead of a mouth, with four wings and six legs, produces a hairy caterpillar, with jaws and teeth, and fourteen feet. A frog produces a tadpole. A black beetle, with gauze wings, and a crusty covering, produces a white, smooth, soft worm; an ephemeron fly, a cod-bait maggot. These, by a progress through different stages of life, and action, and enjoyment, (and, in each state, provided with implements and organs appropriated to the temporary nature which they bear,) arrive at last at the form and fashion of the parent animal. But all this is process, not principle; and proves, moreover, that the property of animated bodies, of producing their like, belongs to them not as a primordial property, not by any blind necessity in the nature of things, but as the effect of economy, wisdom, and design; because the property itself assumes diversities, and submits to deviations dictated by intelligible utilities, and serving distinct purposes of animal happiness.

The opinion, which would consider "generation" as a *principle* in nature; and which would assign this principle as the cause, or endeavour to satisfy our minds with such a cause, of the existence of organized bodies; is confuted, in my judgment, not only by every mark of contrivance dis-

coverable in those bodies, for which it gives us no contriver, offers no account whatever; but also by the farther consideration, that things generated, possess a clear relation to things *not* generated. If it were merely one part of a generated body bearing a relation to another part of the same body; as the mouth of an animal to the throat, the throat to the stomach, the stomach to the intestines, those to the recruiting of the blood, and, by means of the blood, to the nourishment of the whole frame: or if it were only one generated body bearing a relation to another generated body; as the sexes of the same species to each other, animals of prey to their prey, herbivorous and granivorous animals to the plants or seeds upon which they feed; it might be contended, that the whole of this correspondency was attributable to generation, the common origin from which these substances proceeded. But what shall we say to agreements which exist between things generated and things *not generated?* Can it be doubted, was it ever doubted, but that the *lungs* of animals bear a relation to the *air*, as a permanently elastic fluid? They act in it and by it; they cannot act without it. Now, if generation produced the animal, it did not produce the air: yet their properties correspond. The *eye* is made for *light*, and light for the eye. The eye would be of no use without light, and light perhaps of little without eyes; yet one is produced by generation, the other not. The *ear* depends upon *undulations* of air. Here are two sets of motions: first, of the pulses of the air; secondly, of the drum, bones, and nerves of the ear; sets of motions bearing an evident reference to each other: yet the one, and the apparatus for the one, produced by the intervention of generation; the other altogether independent of it.

If it be said, that the air, the light, the elements, the world itself, is *generated;* I answer, that I do not comprehend the proposition. If the term mean any thing similar to what it means when applied to plants or animals, the proposition is certainly without proof; and, I think, draws as near to absurdity, as any proposition can do, which does not include a contradiction in its terms. I am at a loss to conceive, how the formation of the world can be compared to the generation of an animal. If the term generation signify something quite different from what it signifies on ordinary occasions, it may, by the same latitude, signify any thing. In which case, a word or phrase taken from the language of Otaheite, would convey as much theory concerning the origin of the universe, as it does to talk of its being generated.

We know a cause (intelligence) adequate to the appearances which we wish to account for: we have this cause continually producing similar appearances: yet, rejecting this cause, the sufficiency of which we know, and the action of which is constantly before our eyes, we are invited to resort to suppositions destitute of a single fact for their support, and confirmed by no analogy with which we are acquainted. Were it necessary to inquire into the *motives* of men's opinions, I mean their motives separate from their arguments; I should almost suspect, that, because the proof of a Deity drawn from the constitution of nature is not only popular but vulgar, (which may arise from the cogency of the proof, and be indeed its highest recommendation,) and because it is a species almost of *puerility* to take up with it; for these reasons, minds, which are habitually in search of invention and originality, feel a resistless inclination to strike off into other solutions and other expositions. The truth is, that many minds are not so indisposed to any thing which can be offered to them, as they are to the *flatness* of being content with common reasons: and, what is most to be lamented, minds conscious of superiority, are the most liable to this repugnancy.

The "suppositions" here alluded to, all agree in one character: they all endeavour to dispense with the necessity in nature, of a particular, personal intelligence; that is to say, with the exertion of an intending, contriving mind, in the structure and formation of the organized constitutions which the world contains. They would resolve all productions into *unconscious* energies, of a like kind, in that respect, with attraction, magnetism, electricity, &c.; without any thing farther.

In this, the old system of atheism and the new agree. And I much doubt, whether the new schemes have advanced any thing upon the old, or done more than changed the terms of the nomenclature. For instance, I could never see the difference between the antiquated system of atoms, and Buffon's organic molecules. This philosopher, having made a planet by knocking off from the sun a piece of melted glass, in consequence of the stroke of a comet; and having set it in motion, by the same stroke, both round its own axis and the sun; finds his next difficulty to be, how to bring plants and animals upon it. In order to solve this difficulty, we are to suppose the universe replenished with particles, endowed with life, but without organization or senses of their own; and endowed also with a tendency to marshal themselves into organized forms. The concourse of these particles, by virtue of this tendency, but without intelligence, will, or direction, (for I do not find that any of these qualities are ascribed to them,) has produced the living forms which we now see.

Very few of the conjectures which philosophers hazard upon these subjects, have more of pretension in them, than the challenging you to show the direct impossibility of the hypothesis. In the present example, there seemed to be a positive objection to the whole scheme upon the very face of it; which was that, if the case were as here represented, *new* combinations ought to be perpetually taking place; new plants and animals, or organized bodies which were neither, ought to be starting up before our eyes every day. For this, however, our philosopher has an answer. Whilst so many forms of plants and animals are already in existence, and, consequently, so many "internal moulds," as he calls them, are prepared and at hand, the organic particles run into these moulds, and are employed in supplying an accession of substance to them, as well for their growth as for their propagation. By which means, things keep their ancient course. But, says the same philosopher, should any general loss or destruction of the present constitution of organized bodies take place, the particles, for want of "moulds" into which they might enter, would run into different combinations, and replenish the waste with new species of organized substances.

Is there any history to countenance this notion? Is it known, that any destruction has been so repaired? any desert thus re-peopled?

So far as I remember, the only natural appearance mentioned by our author, by way of fact

whereon to build his hypothesis, is the formation of *worms* in the intestines of animals, which is here ascribed to the coalition of superabundant organic particles, floating about in the first passages; and which have combined themselves into these simple animal forms, for want of internal moulds, or of vacancies in those moulds, into which they might be received. The thing referred to, is rather a species of facts, than a single fact; as some other cases may, with equal reason, be included under it. But to make it a fact at all, or, in any sort, applicable to the question, we must begin with asserting an *equivocal* generation, contrary to analogy, and without necessity: contrary to an analogy, which accompanies us to the very limits of our knowledge or inquiries; for wherever, either in plants or animals, we are able to examine the subject, we find procreation from a parent form: without necessity; for I apprehend that it is seldom difficult to suggest methods, by which the eggs, or spawn, or yet invisible rudiments of these vermin, may have obtained a passage into the cavities in which they are found.* Add to this, that their *constancy to their species*, which, I believe, is as regular in these as in the other vermes, decides the question against our philosopher, if, in truth, any question remained upon the subject.

Lastly: These wonder-working instruments, these "internal moulds," what are they after all? what, when examined, but a name without signification; unintelligible, if not self-contradictory; at the best, differing in nothing from the "essential forms" of the Greek philosophy? One short sentence of Buffon's work exhibits his scheme as follows: "When this nutritious and prolific matter, which is diffused throughout all nature, passes through the *internal mould* of an animal or vegetable, and finds a proper matrix, or receptacle, it gives rise to an animal or vegetable of the same species." Does any reader annex a meaning to the expression "internal mould," in this sentence? Ought it then to be said, that, though we have little notion of an internal mould, we have not much more of a designing mind? The very contrary of this assertion is the truth. When we speak of an artificer or an architect, we talk of what is comprehensible to our understanding, and familiar to our experience. We use no other terms than what refer us for their meaning to our consciousness and observation; what express the constant objects of both: whereas names like that we have mentioned, refer us to nothing; excite no idea; convey a sound to the ear, but I think do no more.

Another system which has lately been brought forward, and with much ingenuity, is that of *appetencies*. The principle, and the short account of the theory, is this. Pieces of soft, ductile matter, being endued with propensities or appetencies for particular actions, would, by continual endeavours, carried on through a long series of generations, work themselves gradually into suitable forms; and, at length, acquire, though perhaps by obscure and almost imperceptible improvements, an organization fitted to the action which their respective propensities led them to exert. A piece of animated matter, for example, that was endued with a propensity to *fly*, though ever so shapeless, though no other we will suppose than a round ball to begin with, would, in a course of ages, if not in a million of years, perhaps in a hundred millions of years (for our theorists, having eternity to dispose of, are never sparing in time,) acquire *wings*. The same tendency to locomotion in an aquatic animal, or rather in an animated lump which might happen to be surrounded by water, would end in the production of *fins:* in a living substance, confined to the solid earth, would put out *legs* and *feet;* or, if it took a different turn, would break the body into ringlets, and conclude by *crawling* upon the ground.

Although I have introduced the mention of this theory into this place, I am unwilling to give to it the name of an *atheistic* scheme, for two reasons: first, because, so far as I am able to understand it, the original propensities and the numberless varieties of them (so different, in this respect, from the laws of mechanical nature, which are few and simple,) are, in the plan itself, attributed to the ordination and appointment of an intelligent and designing Creator: secondly, because, likewise, that large postulatum, which is all along assumed and presupposed, the faculty in living bodies of producing other bodies organized like themselves, seems to be referred to the same cause; at least is not attempted to be accounted for by any other. In one important respect, however, the theory before us coincides with atheistic systems, *viz.* in that, in the formation of plants and animals, in the structure and use of their parts, it does away final causes. Instead of the parts of a plant or animal, or the particular structure of the parts, having been intended for the action or the use to which we see them applied; according to this theory, they have themselves grown out of that action, sprung from that use. The theory therefore dispenses with that which we insist upon, the necessity, in each particular case, of an intelligent, designing mind, for the contriving and determining of the forms which organized bodies bear. Give our philosopher these appetencies; give him a portion of living irritable matter (a nerve, or the clipping of a nerve,) to work upon; give also to his incipient or progressive forms, the power, in every stage of their alteration, of propagating their like; and, if he is to be believed, he could replenish the world with all the vegetable and animal productions which we at present see in it.

The scheme under consideration is open to the same objection with other conjectures of a similar tendency, *viz.* a total defect of evidence. No changes, like those which the theory requires, have ever been observed. All the changes in Ovid's Metamorphoses might have been effected by these appetencies, if the theory were true: yet not an example, nor the pretence of an example, is offered of a single change being known to have taken place. Nor is the order of generation obedient to the principle upon which this theory is built. The mammæ* of the male have not vanished

* I trust I may be excused, for not citing, as another fact which is to confirm the hypothesis, a grave assertion of this writer, that the branches of trees upon which the stag feeds, break out again in his horns. Such *facts* merit no discussion.

* I confess myself totally at a loss to guess at the reason, either final or efficient, for this part of the animal frame; unless there be some foundation for an opinion, of which I draw the hint from a paper of Mr. Everard Home, (Phil. Transact. 1799, p. 2.) *viz.* that the mammæ of the fœtus may be formed, before the sex is determined.

by inusitation; *nec curtorum, per multa sæcula, Judæorum propagini deest præputium.* It is easy to say, and it has been said, that the alterative process is too slow to be perceived; that it has been carried on through tracts of immeasurable time; and that the present order of things is the result of a gradation, of which no human records can trace the steps. It is easy to say this; and yet it is still true, that the hypothesis remains destitute of evidence.

The *analogies* which have been alleged, are of the following kind: The *bunch* of a camel, is said to be no other than the effect of carrying burdens; a service in which the species has been employed from the most ancient times of the world. The first race, by the daily loading of the back, would probably find a small grumous tumour to be formed in the flesh of that part. The next progeny would bring this tumour into the world with them. The life to which they were destined, would increase it. The cause which first generated the tubercle being continued, it would go on, through every succession, to augment its size, till it attained the form and the bulk under which it now appears. This may serve for one instance: another, and that also of the passive sort, is taken from certain species of birds. Birds of the *crane* kind, as the crane itself, the heron, bittern, stork, have, in general, their thighs bare of feathers. This privation is accounted for from the habit of wading in water, and from the effect of that element to check the growth of feathers upon these parts; in consequence of which, the health and vegetation of the feathers declined through each generation of the animal; the tender down, exposed to cold and wetness, became weak, and thin, and rare, till the deterioration ended in the result which we see, of absolute nakedness. I will mention a third instance, because it is drawn from an active habit, as the two last were from passive habits; and that is the *pouch* of the pelican. The description which naturalists give of this organ, is as follows: "From the lower edges of the under chap, hangs a bag, reaching from the whole length of the bill to the neck, which is said to be capable of containing fifteen quarts of water. This bag, the bird has a power of wrinkling up into the hollow of the under chap. When the bag is empty, it is not seen; but when the bird has fished with success, it is incredible to what an extent it is often dilated. The first thing the pelican does in fishing, is to fill the bag; and then it returns to digest its burden at leisure. The bird preys upon the large fishes, and hides them by dozens in its pouch. When the bill is opened to its widest extent, a person may run his head into the bird's mouth; and conceal it in this monstrous pouch, thus adapted for very singular purposes."* Now this extraordinary conformation is nothing more, say our philosophers, than the result of habit; not of the habit or effort of a single pelican, or of a single race of pelicans, but of a habit perpetuated through a long series of generations. The pelican soon found the conveniency of reserving in its mouth, when its appetite was glutted, the remainder of its prey, which is fish. The fulness produced by this attempt, of course stretched the skin which lies between the under chaps, as being the most yielding part of the mouth. Every distension increased the cavity. The original bird, and many generations which succeeded him, might find difficulty enough in making the pouch answer this purpose: but future pelicans, entering upon life with a pouch derived from their progenitors, of considerable capacity, would more readily accelerate its advance to perfection, by frequently pressing down the sac with the weight of fish which it might now be made to contain.

These, or of this kind, are the analogies relied upon. Now, in the first place, the instances themselves are unauthenticated by testimony; and, in theory, to say the least of them, open to great objections. Who ever read of camels without bunches, or with bunches less than those with which they are at present usually formed? A bunch, not unlike the camel's, is found between the shoulders of the buffalo; of the origin of which it is impossible to give the account here given. In the second example; Why should the application of water, which appears to promote and thicken the growth of feathers upon the bodies and breasts of geese, and swans, and other water-fowls, have divested of this covering the thighs of cranes? The third instance, which appears to me as plausible as any that can be produced, has this against it, that it is a singularity restricted to the species; whereas, if it had its commencement in the cause and manner which have been assigned, the like conformation might be expected to take place in other birds, which feed upon fish. How comes it to pass, that the pelican alone was the inventress, and her descendants the only inheritors, of this curious resource?

But it is the less necessary to controvert the instances themselves, as it is a straining of analogy beyond all limits of reason and credibility, to assert that birds, and beasts, and fish, with all their variety and complexity of organization, have been brought into their forms, and distinguished into their several kinds and natures, by the same process (even if that process could be demonstrated, or had it ever been actually noticed) as might seem to serve for the gradual generation of a camel's bunch, or a pelican's pouch.

The solution, when applied to the works of nature *generally*, is contradicted by many of the phenomena, and totally inadequate to others. The *ligaments* or strictures, by which the tendons are tied down at the angles of the joints, could, by no possibility, be formed by the motion or exercise of the tendons themselves; by any appetency exciting these part into action; or by any tendency arising thereform. The tendency is all the other way; the *conatus* in constant opposition to them. Length of time does not help the case at all, but the reverse. The *valves* also in the blood-vessels, could never be formed in the manner which our theorist proposes. The blood, in its right and natural course, has no tendency to form them. When obstructed or refluent, it has the contrary. These parts could not grow out of their use, though they had eternity to grow in.

The *senses* of animals appear to me altogether incapable of receiving the explanation of their origin which this theory affords. Including under the word "sense" the organ and the perception, we have no account of either. How will our philosopher get at *vision*, or make an eye? How should the blind animal affect sight, of which blind animals, we know, have neither conception nor desire? Affecting it, by what operation of its will, by what endeavour to see, could it so deter-

* Goldsmith, vol. vi. p. 52.

mine the fluids of its body, as to inchoate the formation of an eye? or, suppose the eye formed, would the perception follow? The same of the other senses. And this objection holds its force, ascribe what you will to the hand of time, to the power of habit, to changes too slow to be observed by man, or brought within any comparison which he is able to make of past things with the present: concede what you please to these arbitrary and unattested suppositions, how will they help you? Here is no inception. No laws, no course, no powers of nature which prevail at present, nor any analogous to these, would give commencement to a new sense. And it is in vain to inquire, how that might proceed, which could never *begin*.

I think the senses to be the most inconsistent with the hypothesis before us, of any part of the animal frame. But other parts are sufficiently so. The solution does not apply to the parts of animals, which have little in them of motion. If we could suppose joints and muscles to be gradually formed by action and exercise, what action or exercise could form a skull, and fill it with brains? No effort of the animal could determine the clothing of its skin. What *conatus* could give prickles to the porcupine or hedgehog, or to the sheep its fleece?

In the last place: What do these appetencies mean when applied to plants? I am not able to give a signification to the term, which can be transferred from animals to plants; or which is common to both. Yet a no less successful organization is found in plants, than what obtains in animals. A solution is wanted for one, as well as the other.

Upon the whole; after all the schemes and struggles of a reluctant philosophy, the necessary resort is to a Deity. The marks of *design* are too strong to be gotten over. Design must have had a designer. That designer must have been a person. That person is God.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the Natural Attributes of the Deity.

It is an immense conclusion, that there is a God; a perceiving, intelligent, designing Being; at the head of creation, and from whose will it proceeded. The *attributes* of such a Being, suppose his reality to be proved, must be adequate to the magnitude, extent, and multiplicity of his operations: which are not only vast beyond comparison with those performed by any other power; but, so far as respects our conceptions of them, infinite, because they are unlimited on all sides.

Yet the contemplation of a nature so exalted, however surely we arrive at the proof of its existence, overwhelms our faculties. The mind feels its powers sink under the subject. One consequence of which is, that from painful abstraction the thoughts seek relief in sensible images.—Whence may be deduced the ancient, and almost universal propensity to idolatrous substitutions. They are the resources of a labouring imagination. False religions usually fall in with the natural propensity; true religions, or such as have derived themselves from the true, resist it.

It is one of the advantages of the revelations which we acknowledge, that, whilst they reject idolatry with its many pernicious accompaniments, they introduce the Deity to human apprehension, under an idea more personal, more determinate, more within its compass, than the theology of nature can do. And this they do by representing him exclusively under the relation in which he stands to ourselves; and, for the most part, under some precise character, resulting from that relation, or from the history of his providences: which method suits the span of our intellects much better than the universality which enters into the idea of God, as deduced from the views of nature. When, therefore, these representations are well founded in point of authority, (for all depends upon that,) they afford a condescension to the state of our faculties, of which, they who have most reflected on the subject, will be the first to acknowledge the want and the value.

Nevertheless, if we be careful to imitate the documents of our religion, by confining our explanations to what concerns ourselves, and do not affect more precision in our ideas than the subject allows of, the several terms which are employed to denote the attributes of the Deity, may be made, even in natural religion, to bear a sense consistent with truth and reason, and not surpassing our comprehension.

These terms are; Omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, self-existence, necessary existence, spirituality.

"Omnipotence," "omniscience," "infinite" power, "infinite" knowledge, are *superlatives*, expressing our conception of these attributes in the strongest and most elevated terms which language supplies. We ascribe power to the Deity under the name of "omnipotence," the strict and correct conclusion being, that a power which could create such a world as this is, must be beyond all comparison, greater than any which we experience in ourselves, than any which we observe in other visible agents; greater also than any which we can want, for our individual protection and preservation, in the Being upon whom we depend. It is a power, likewise, to which we are not authorized, by our observation or knowledge, to assign any limits of space or duration.

Very much of the same sort of remark is applicable to the term "omniscience," infinite knowledge, or infinite wisdom. In strictness of language, there is a difference between knowledge and wisdom; wisdom always supposing action, and action directed by it. With respect to the first, *viz. knowledge*, the Creator must know, intimately, the constitution and properties of the things which he created; which seems also to imply a foreknowledge of their action upon one another, and of their changes; at least, so far as the same result from trains of physical and necessary causes. His omniscience also, as far as respects things present, is deducible from his nature, as an intelligent being, joined with the extent or rather the universality, of his operations. Where he acts, he is; and where he is, he perceives. The *wisdom* of the Deity, as testified in the works of creation, surpasses all idea we have of wisdom, drawn from the highest intellectual operations of the highest class of intelligent beings with whom we are acquainted; and, which is of the chief importance to us, whatever be its compass or extent, which it is evidently impossible that we should be able to determine, it must be adequate to the conduct of that order of things

under which we live. And this is enough. It is of very inferior consequence, by what terms we express our notion, or rather our admiration, of this attribute. The terms, which the piety and the usage of language have rendered habitual to us, may be as proper as any other. We can trace this attribute much beyond what is necessary for any conclusion to which we have occasion to apply it. The degree of knowledge and power requisite for the formation of created nature, cannot, with respect to us, be distinguished from infinite.

The Divine "omnipresence" stands, in natural theology, upon this foundation:—In every part and place of the universe with which we are acquainted, we perceive the exertion of a power, which we believe, mediately or immediately to proceed from the Deity. For instance; in what part or point of space, that has ever been explored, do we not discover attraction? In what regions do we not find light. In what accessible portion of our globe, do we not meet with gravity, magnetism, electricity; together with the properties also and powers of organized substances, of vegetable or of animated nature? Nay, farther, we may ask, What kingdom is there of nature, what corner of space, in which there is any thing that can be examined by us, where we do not fall upon contrivance and design? The only reflection perhaps which arises in our minds from this view of the world around us is, that the laws of nature everywhere prevail; that they are uniform and universal. But what do we mean by the laws of nature, or by any law? Effects are produced by power, not by laws. A law cannot execute itself. A law refers us to an agent. Now an agency so general, as that we cannot discover its absence, or assign the place in which some effect of its continued energy is not found, may, in popular language at least, and, perhaps, without much deviation from philosophical strictness, be called universal: and, with not quite the same, but with no inconsiderable propriety, the person or Being, in whom that power resides, or from whom it is derived, may be taken to be *omnipresent*. He who upholds all things by his power, may be said to be every where present.

This is called a virtual presence. There is also what metaphysicians denominate an essential ubiquity; and which idea the language of Scripture seems to favour: but the former, I think, goes as far as natural theology carries us.

"Eternity" is a negative idea, clothed with a positive name. It supposes, in that to which it is applied, a present existence; and is the negation of a beginning or an end of that existence. As applied to the Deity, it has not been controverted by those who acknowledge a Deity at all. Most assuredly, there never was a time in which nothing existed, because that condition must have continued. The universal *blank* must have remained; nothing could rise up out of it; nothing could ever have existed since; nothing could exist now. In strictness, however, we have no concern with duration prior to that of the visible world. Upon this article therefore of theology, it is sufficient to know, that the contriver necessarily existed before the contrivance.

"Self-existence" is another negative idea, *viz.* the negation of a preceding cause, as of a progenitor, a maker, an author, a creator.

"Necessary existence" means demonstrable existence.

"Spirituality" expresses an idea, made up of a negative part, and of a positive part. The negative part consists in the exclusion of some of the known properties of matter, especially of solidity, of the *vis inertiæ*, and of gravitation. The positive part comprises perception, thought, will, power, *action;* by which last term is meant, the origination of motion; the quality, perhaps, in which resides the essential superiority of spirit over matter, "which cannot move, unless it be moved; and cannot but move, when impelled by another."* I apprehend that there can be no difficulty in applying to the Deity both parts of this idea.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Unity of the Deity.

Of the "Unity of the Deity," the proof is, the *uniformity* of plan observable in the universe. The universe itself is a system; each part either depending upon other parts, or being connected with other parts by some common law of motion, or by the presence of some common substance. One principle of gravitation causes a stone to drop towards the earth, and the moon to wheel round it. One law of attraction carries all the different planets about the sun. This philosophers demonstrate. There are also other points of agreement amongst them, which may be considered as marks of the identity of their origin, and of their intelligent Author. In all are found the convenience and stability derived from gravitation. They all experience vicissitudes of days and nights, and changes of season. They all, at least Jupiter, Mars, and Venus, have the same advantages from their atmosphere as we have. In all the planets, the axes of rotation are permanent. Nothing is more probable than that the same attracting influence, acting according to the same rule, reaches to the fixed stars: but, if this be only probable, another thing is certain, *viz.* that the same element of light does. The light from a fixed star affects our eyes in the same manner, is refracted and reflected according to the same laws, as the light of a candle. The velocity of the light of the fixed stars is also the same as the velocity of the light of the sun, reflected from the satellites of Jupiter. The heat of the sun, in kind, differs nothing from the heat of a coal fire.

In our own globe, the case is clearer. New countries are continually discovered, but the old laws of nature are always found in them: new plants perhaps, or animals, but always in company with plants and animals which we already know; and always possessing many of the same general properties. We never get amongst such original, or totally different, modes of existence, as to indicate, that we are come into the province of a different Creator, or under the direction of a different will. In truth, the same order of things attends us, wherever we go. The elements act upon one another, electricity operates, the tides rise and fall, the magnetic needle elects its position, in one region of the earth and sea, as well

* Bishop Wilkin's Principles of Natural Religion, p. 106.

as in another. One atmosphere invests all parts of the globe, and connects all; one sun illuminates, one moon exerts its specific attraction upon all parts. If there be a variety in natural effects, as, *e. g.* in the tides of different seas, that very variety is the result of the same cause, acting under different circumstances. In many cases this is proved; in all, is probable.

The inspection and comparison of *living* forms, add to this argument examples without number. Of all large terrestrial animals, the structure is very much alike; their senses nearly the same; their natural functions and passions nearly the same; their viscera nearly the same, both in substance, shape, and office: digestion, nutrition, circulation, secretion, go on, in a similar manner, in all: the great circulating fluid is the same; for, I think no difference has been discovered in the properties of *blood*, from whatever animal it be drawn. The experiment of transfusion proves that the blood of one animal will serve for another. The *skeletons* also of the larger terrestrial animals, show particular varieties, but still under a great general affinity. The resemblance is somewhat less, yet sufficiently evident between quadrupeds and birds. They are all alike in five respects, for one in which they differ.

In *fish*, which belong to another department, as it were, of nature, the points of comparison become fewer. But we never lose sight of our analogy, *e. g.* we still meet with a stomach, a liver, a spine; with bile and blood; with teeth; with eyes, (which eyes are only slightly varied from our own, and which variation in truth demonstrates not an interruption, but a continuance of the same exquisite plan; for it is the adaptation of the organ to the element, *viz.* to the different refraction of light passing into the eye out of a denser medium.) The provinces, also, themselves of water and earth, are connected by the species of animals which inhabit both; and also by a large tribe of aquatic animals which closely resemble the terrestrial in their internal structure; I mean the cetaceous tribe, which have hot blood, respiring lungs, bowels, and other essential parts, like those of land animals. This similitude, surely, bespeaks the same creation and the same Creator.

Insects and *shell-fish* appear to me to differ from other classes of animals the most widely of any. Yet even here, beside many points of particular resemblance, there exists a general relation of a peculiar kind. It is the relation of inversion; the law of contrariety: namely, that, whereas, in other animals, the bones, to which the muscles are attached, lie *within* the body; in insects and shell-fish, they lie on the *outside* of it. The shell of a lobster performs to the animal the office of a *bone*, by furnishing to the tendons that fixed basis or immoveable fulcrum, without which, mechanically, they could not act. The crust of an insect is its shell, and answers the like purpose. The shell also of an oyster stands in the place of a *bone;* the bases of the muscles being fixed to it, in the same manner as, in other animals, they are fixed to the bones. All which (under wonderful varieties, indeed, and adaptations of form,) confesses an imitation, a remembrance, a carrying on of the same plan.

The observations here made, are equally applicable to plants; but, I think, unnecessary to be pursued. It is a very striking circumstance, and alone sufficient to prove all which we contend for, that, in this part likewise of organized nature, we perceive a continuation of the *sexual* system.

Certain however it is, that the whole argument for the divine unity, goes no farther than to a unity of counsel.

It may likewise be acknowledged, that no arguments which we are in possession of, exclude the ministry of subordinate agents. If such there be, they act under a presiding, a controlling will; because they act according to certain general restrictions, by certain common rules, and, as it should seem, upon a general plan: but still such agents, and different ranks, and classes, and degrees of them, may be employed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Goodness of the Deity.

The proof of the *divine goodness* rests upon two propositions: each, as we contend, capable of being made out by observations drawn from the appearances of nature.

The first is, "that, in a vast plurality of instances in which contrivance is perceived, the design of the contrivance is *beneficial.*"

The second, "that the Deity has superadded *pleasure* to animal sensations, beyond what was necessary for any other purpose, or when the purpose, so far as it was necessary, might have been effected by the operation of pain."

First, "In a vast plurality of instances in which contrivance is perceived, the design of the contrivance is *beneficial.*"

No productions of nature display contrivance so manifestly as the parts of animals; and the parts of animals have all of them, I believe, a real, and, with very few exceptions, all of them a known and intelligible, subserviency to the use of the animal. Now, when the multitude of animals is considered, the number of parts in each, their figure and fitness, the faculties depending upon them, the variety of species, the complexity of structure, the success, in so many cases, and felicity of the result, we can never reflect, without the profoundest adoration, upon the character of that Being from whom all these things have proceeded: we cannot help acknowledging, what an exertion of benevolence creation was; of a benevolence how minute in its care, how vast in its comprehension!

When we appeal to the parts and faculties of animals, and to the limbs and senses of animals in particular, we state, I conceive, the proper medium of proof for the conclusion which we wish to establish. I will not say, that the insensible parts of nature are made solely for the sensitive parts: but this I say, that, when we consider the benevolence of the Deity, we can only consider it in relation to sensitive being. Without this reference, or referred to any thing else, the attribute has no object: the term has no meaning. Dead matter is nothing. The parts, therefore, especially the limbs and senses, of animals, although they constitute, in mass and quantity, a small portion of the material creation, yet, since they alone are instruments of perception, they compose what may be called the whole of visible nature, estimated with a view to the disposition of its Author. Consequently, it is in *these* that we are to seek his

character. It is by these that we are to prove, that the world was made with a benevolent design.

Nor is the design abortive. It is a happy world after all. The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence. In a spring noon, or a summer evening, on whichever side I turn my eyes, myriads of happy beings crowd upon my view. "The insect youth are on the wing." Swarms of new-born *flies* are trying their pinions in the air. Their sportive motions, their wanton mazes, their gratuitous activity, their continual change of place without use or purpose, testify their joy, and the exultation which they feel in their lately discovered faculties. A *bee* amongst the flowers in spring, is one of the most cheerful objects that can be looked upon. Its life appears to be all enjoyment; so busy, and so pleased: yet it is only a specimen of insect life, with which, by reason of the animal being half domesticated, we happen to be better acquainted than we are with that of others. The *whole winged* insect tribe, it is probable, are equally intent upon their proper employments, and, under every variety of constitution, gratified, and perhaps equally gratified, by the offices which the Author of their nature has assigned to them. But the atmosphere is not the only scene of enjoyment for the insect race. Plants are covered with aphides, greedily sucking their juices, and constantly, as it should seem, in the act of sucking. It cannot be doubted but that this is a state of gratification. What else should fix them so close to the operation, and so long? Other species are *running about;* with an alacrity in their motions, which carries with it every mark of pleasure. Large patches of ground are sometimes half covered with these brisk and sprightly natures. If we look to what the *waters* produce, shoals of the fry of fish frequent the margins of rivers, of lakes, and of the sea itself. These are so happy, that they know not what to do with themselves. Their attitudes, their vivacity, their leaps, out of the water, their frolics in it, (which I have noticed a thousand times with equal attention and amusement,) all conduce to show their excess of spirits, and are simply the effects of that excess. Walking by the sea-side, in a calm evening, upon a sandy shore, and with an ebbing tide, I have frequently remarked the appearance of a dark cloud, or rather, very thick mist hanging over the edge of the water, to the height, perhaps, of half a yard, and of the breadth of two or three yards, stretching along the coast as far as the eye could reach, and always retiring with the water. When this cloud came to be examined, it proved to be nothing else than so much space, filled with young *shrimps*, in the act of bounding into the air from the shallow margin of the water, or from the wet sand. If any motion of a mute animal could express delight, it was this: if they had meant to make signs of their happiness, they could not have done it more intelligibly. Suppose then, what I have no doubt of, each individual of this number to be in a state of positive enjoyment; what a sum, collectively, of gratification and pleasure have we here before our view!

The *young* of all animals appear to me to receive pleasure simply from the exercise of their limbs and bodily faculties, without reference to any end to be attained, or any use to be answered by the exertion. A child, without knowing any thing of the use of language, is in a high degree delighted with being able to speak. Its incessant repetition of a few articulate sounds, or, perhaps, of the single word which it has learnt to pronounce, proves this point clearly. Nor is it less pleased with its first successful endeavours to walk, or rather to run, (which precedes walking,) although entirely ignorant of the importance of the attainment to its future life, and even without applying it to any present purpose. A child is delighted with speaking, without having any thing to say; and with walking, without knowing where to go. And prior to both these, I am disposed to believe, that the waking hours of infancy are agreeably taken up with the exercise of vision, or perhaps, more properly speaking, with learning to see.

But it is not for youth alone that the great Parent of creation hath provided. Happiness is found with the purring cat, no less than with the playful kitten; in the arm-chair of dozing age, as well as in either the sprightliness of the dance or the animation of the chase. To novelty, to acuteness of sensation, to hope, to ardour of pursuit, succeeds, what is, in no inconsiderable degree, an equivalent for them all, "perception of ease." Herein is the exact difference between the young and the old. The young are not happy but when enjoying pleasure; the old are happy when free from pain. And this constitution suits with the degrees of animal power which they respectively possess. The vigour of youth was to be stimulated to action by impatience of rest; whilst to the imbecility of age, quietness and repose become positive gratifications. In one important respect the advantage is with the old. A state of ease is, generally speaking, more attainable than a state of pleasure. A constitution, therefore, which can enjoy ease, is preferable to that which can taste only pleasure. This same perception of ease oftentimes renders old age a condition of great comfort; especially when riding at its anchor after a busy or tempestuous life. It is well described by Rousseau, to be the interval of repose and enjoyment, between the hurry and the end of life. How far the same cause extends to other animal natures, cannot be judged of with certainty. The appearance of satisfaction, with which most animals, as their activity subsides, seek and enjoy rest, affords reason to believe, that this source of gratification is appointed to advance life, under all, or most of its various forms. In the species with which we are best acquainted, namely our own, I am far, even as an observer of human life, from thinking that youth is its happiest season, much less the only happy one: as a Christian, I am willing to believe that there is a great deal of truth in the following representation given by a very pious writer, as well as excellent man:* "To the intelligent and virtuous, old age presents a scene of tranquil enjoyments, of obedient appetite, of well-regulated affections, of maturity in knowledge, and of calm preparation for immortality. In this serene and dignified state, placed as it were on the confines of two worlds, the mind of a good man reviews what is past with a complacency of an approving conscience; and looks forward with humble confidence in the mercy of God, and with devout aspirations towards his eternal and ever-increasing favour."

* Father's Instructions; by Dr. Percival of Manchester, p. 317.

What is seen in different stages of the same life, is still more exemplified in the lives of different animals. Animal enjoyments are infinitely *diversified*. The modes of life, to which the organization of different animals respectively determines them, are not only of various but of opposite kinds. Yet each is happy in its own. For instance: animals of prey live much alone; animals of a milder constitution, in society. Yet the herring, which lives in shoals, and the sheep, which lives in flocks, are not more happy in a crowd, or more contented amongst their companions, than is the pike, or the lion, with the deep solitudes of the pool, or the forest.

But it will be said, that the instances which we have here brought forward, whether of vivacity or repose, or of apparent enjoyment derived from either, are picked and favourable instances. We answer, first, that they are instances, nevertheless, which comprise large provinces of sensitive existence; that every case which we have described, is the case of millions. At this moment, in every given moment of time, how many myriads of animals are eating their food, gratifying their appetites, ruminating in their holes, accomplishing their wishes, pursuing their pleasures, taking their pastimes? In each individual, how many things must go right for it to be at ease; yet how large a proportion out of every species is so in every assignable instant! Secondly, we contend in the terms of our original proposition, that throughout the whole of life, as it is diffused in nature, and as far as we are acquainted with it, looking to the average of sensations, the plurality and the preponderancy is in favour of happiness by a vast excess. In our own species, in which perhaps the assertion may be more questionable than in any other, the prepollency of good over evil, of health, for example, and ease, over pain and distress, is evinced by the very notice which calamities excite. What inquiries does the sickness of our friends produce! what conversation their misfortunes! This shows that the common course of things is in favour of happiness; that happiness is the rule, misery the exception. Were the order reversed, our attention would be called to examples of health and competency, instead of disease and want.

One great cause of our insensibility to the goodness of the Creator, is the very *extensiveness* of his bounty. We prize but little what we share only in common with the rest, or with the generality of our species. When we hear of blessings, we think forthwith of successes, of prosperous fortunes, of honours, riches, preferments, *i. e.* of those advantages and superiorities over others, which we happen either to possess, or to be in pursuit of, or to covet. The common benefits of our nature entirely escape us. Yet these are the great things. These constitute what most properly ought to be accounted blessings of Providence; what alone, if we might so speak, are worthy of its care. Nightly rest and daily bread, the ordinary use of our limbs, and senses, and understandings, are gifts which admit of no comparison with any other. Yet, because almost every man we meet with possesses these, we leave them out of our enumeration. They raise no sentiment; they move no gratitude. Now, herein is our judgment perverted by our selfishness. A blessing ought in truth to be the *more* satisfactory, the bounty at least of the donor is rendered more conspicuous, by its very diffusion, its commonness, its cheapness; by its falling to the lot, and forming the happiness, of the great bulk and body of our species, as well as of ourselves. Nay, even when we do not possess it, it ought to be matter of thankfulness that others do. But we have a different way of thinking. We court distinction. That is not the worst; we *see* nothing but what has distinction to recommend it. This necessarily contracts our views of the Creator's beneficence within a narrow compass; and most unjustly. It is in those things which are so common as to be no distinction, that the amplitude of the divine benignity is perceived.

But pain, no doubt, and privations exist, in numerous instances, and to a degree, which, collectively, would be very great, if they were compared with any other thing than with the mass of animal fruition. For the application, therefore, of our proposition to that *mixed* state of things which these exceptions induce, two rules are necessary, and both, I think, just and fair rules. One is, that we regard those effects alone which are accompanied with proofs of intention: the other, that when we cannot resolve all appearances into benevolence of design, we make the few give place to the many; the little to the great; that we take our judgment from a large and decided preponderancy, if there be one.

I crave leave to transcribe into this place, what I have said upon this subject in my Moral Philosophy:—

"When God created the human species, either he wished their happiness, or he wished their misery, or he was indifferent and unconcerned about either.

"If he had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses to be so many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment: or by placing us amidst objects, so ill suited to our perceptions as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for example, every thing we tasted, bitter; every thing we saw, loathsome; every thing we touched, a sting; every smell, a stench; and every sound, a discord.

"If he had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune (as all design by this supposition is excluded) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to produce it.

"But either of these, and still more both of them, being too much to be attributed to accident, nothing remains but the first supposition, that God, when he created the human species, wished their happiness; and made for them the provision which he has made, with that view and for that purpose.

"The same argument may be proposed in different terms; *thus:* Contrivance proves design: and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances: and all the contrivances which we are acquainted with, are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil, no doubt, exists; but is never, that we can perceive, the *object* of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it: or even, if you will, let it be called a de-

fect in the contrivance: but it is not the object of it. This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you would hardly say of the sickle, that it is made to cut the reaper's hand; though from the construction of the instrument and the manner of using it, this mischief often follows. But if you had occasion to describe instruments of torture, or execution: this engine, you would say, is to extend the sinews; this to dislocate the joints; this to break the bones; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Here, pain and misery are the very objects of the contrivance. Now, nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of nature. We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said, this is to irritate; this to inflame; this duct is to convey the gravel to the kidneys; this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout: if by chance he come at a part of which he knows not the use, the most he can say is, that it is useless; no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment."

The TWO CASES which appear to me to have the most of difficulty in them, as forming the most of the appearance of exception to the representation here given, are those of *venomous* animals, and of animals *preying* upon one another. These properties of animals, wherever they are found, must, I think, be referred to design; because there is in all cases of the first, and in most cases of the second, an express and distinct organization provided for the producing of them. Under the first head, the fangs of vipers, the stings of wasps and scorpions, are as clearly intended for their purpose, as any animal structure is for any purpose the most incontestably beneficial. And the same thing must, under the second head, be acknowledged of the talons and beaks of birds, of the tusks, teeth, and claws, of beasts of prey; of the shark's mouth, of the spider's web, and of numberless weapons of offence belonging to different tribes of voracious insects. We cannot, therefore, avoid the difficulty by saying, that the effect was not intended. The only question open to us is, whether it be ultimately evil. From the confessed and felt imperfection of our knowledge, we ought to presume that there may be consequences of this economy which are hidden from us; from the benevolence which pervades the general designs of nature, we ought also to presume, that these consequences, if they could enter into our calculation, would turn the balance on the favourable side. Both these I contend to be reasonable presumptions. Not reasonable presumptions, if these two cases were the only cases which nature presented to our observation; but reasonable presumptions under the reflection, that the cases in question are combined with a multitude of intentions, all proceeding from the same author, and all, except these, directed to ends of undisputed utility. Of the vindications, however, of this economy, which we are able to assign, such as most extenuate the difficulty are the following.

With respect to *venomous* bites and stings, it may be observed,—

1. That, the animal itself being regarded, the faculty complained of is *good:* being conducive, in all cases, to the defence of the animal; in some cases, to the subduing of its prey; and in some, probably, to the killing of it, when caught, by a mortal wound, inflicted in the passage to the stomach, which may be no less merciful to the victim, than salutary to the devourer. In the viper, for instance, the poisonous fang may do that which, in other animals of prey, is done by the crush of the teeth. Frogs and mice might be swallowed alive without it.

2. But it will be said, that this provision, when it comes to the case of bites, deadly even to human bodies and to those of large quadrupeds, is greatly *overdone;* that it might have fulfilled its use, and yet have been much less deleterious than it is. Now I believe the case of bites, which produce death in large animals, (of stings I think there are none,) to be very few. The experiments of the Abbé Fontana, which were numerous, go strongly to the proof of this point. He found that it required the action of five exasperated vipers to kill a dog of a moderate size: but that, to the killing of a mouse or a frog, a single bite was sufficient; which agrees with the use we assign to the faculty. The Abbé seemed to be of opinion, that the bite even of the rattle-snake would not usually be mortal; allowing, however, that in certain particularly unfortunate cases, as when the puncture had touched some very tender part, pricked a principal nerve for instance, or, as it is said, some more considerable lymphatic vessel, death might speedily ensue.

3. It has been, I think, very justly remarked, concerning serpents, that, whilst only a few species possess the venomous property, that property guards the whole tribe. The most innocuous snake is avoided with as much care as a viper. Now the terror with which large animals regard this class of reptiles, is its protection; and this terror is founded on the formidable revenge, which a few of the number, compared with the whole, are capable of taking. The species of serpents, described by Linnæus, amount to two hundred and eighteen, of which thirty-two only are poisonous.

4. It seems to me, that animal constitutions are provided, not only for each element, but for each state of the elements, *i. e.* for every climate, and for every temperature; and that part of the mischief complained of, arises from animals (the human animal most especially) occupying situations upon the earth, which do not belong to them, nor were ever intended for their habitation. The folly and wickedness of mankind, and necessities proceeding from these causes, have driven multitudes of the species to seek a refuge amongst burning sands, whilst countries, blessed with hospitable skies, and with the most fertile soils, remain almost without a human tenant. We invade the territories of wild beasts and venomous reptiles, and then complain that we are infested by their bites and stings. Some accounts of Africa place this observation in a strong point of view. "The deserts," says Adanson, "are entirely barren, except where they are found to produce serpents: and in such quantities, that some extensive plains are almost entirely covered with them." These are the natures appropriated to the situation. Let them enjoy their existence; let them have their country. Surface enough will be left to man, though his numbers were increased a hundred-fold, and left to him, where he might live, exempt from these annoyances.

The SECOND CASE, *viz.* that of animals *devouring* one another, furnishes a consideration of much larger extent. To judge whether, as a general provision, this can be deemed an *evil*, even so far as we understand its consequences, which, probably, is a partial understanding, the following reflections are fit to be attended to.

1. Immortality upon this earth is out of the question. Without death there could be no generation, no sexes, no parental relation, *i. e.* as things are constituted, no animal happiness. The particular duration of life, assigned to different animals, can form no part of the objection; because, whatever that duration be, whilst it remains finite and limited, it may always be asked, why it is no longer. The natural age of different animals varies, from a single day to a century of years. No account can be given of this; nor could any be given, whatever other proportion of life had obtained amongst them.

The term then of life in different animals being the same as it is, the question is, what mode of taking it away is the best even for the animal itself.

Now, according to the established order of nature, (which we must suppose to prevail, or we cannot reason at all upon the subject,) the three methods by which life is usually put an end to, are acute diseases, decay, and violence. The simple and natural life of *brutes*, is not often visited by acute distempers; nor could it be deemed an improvement of their lot, if they were. Let it be considered, therefore, in what a condition of suffering and misery a brute animal is placed, which is left to perish by *decay*. In human sickness or infirmity, there is the assistance of man's rational fellow-creatures, if not to alleviate his pains, at least to minister to his necessities, and to supply the place of his own activity. A brute, in his wild and natural state, does every thing for himself. When his strength, therefore, or his speed, or his limbs, or his senses, fail him, he is delivered over, either to absolute famine, or to the protracted wretchedness of a life slowly wasted by the scarcity of food. Is it then to see the world filled with drooping, superannuated, half-starved, helpless, and unhelped, animals, that you would alter the present system of pursuit and prey?

2. Which system is also to them the spring of motion and activity on both sides. The pursuit of its prey forms the employment, and appears to constitute the pleasure, of a considerable part of the animal creation. The using of the means of defence, or flight, or precaution, forms also the business of another part. And even of this latter tribe, we have no reason to suppose, that their happiness is much molested by their fears. Their danger exists continually; and in some cases they seem to be so far sensible of it as to provide, in the best manner they can, against it; but it is only when the attack is actually made upon them, that they appear to suffer from it. To contemplate the insecurity of their condition with anxiety and dread, requires a degree of reflection, which (happily for themselves) they do not possess. A *hare*, notwithstanding the number of its dangers and its enemies, is as playful an animal as any other.

3. But, to do justice to the question, the system of animal *destruction* ought always to be considered in strict connexion with another property of animal nature, *viz. superfecundity*. They are countervailing qualities. One subsists by the correction of the other. In treating, therefore, of the subject under this view (which is, I believe, the true one,) our business will be, first, to point out the advantages which are gained by the powers in nature of a superabundant multiplication; and, then, to show, that these advantages are so many reasons for appointing that system of national hostilities, which we are endeavouring to account for.

In almost all cases, nature produces her supplies with profusion. A single cod-fish spawns, in one season, a greater number of eggs, than all the inhabitants of England amount to. A thousand other instances of prolific generation might be stated, which, though not equal to this, would carry on the increase of the species with a rapidity which outruns calculation, and to an immeasurable extent. The advantages of such a constitution are two: first, that it tends to keep the world always full; whilst, secondly, it allows the proportion between the several species of animals to be differently modified, as different purposes require, or as different situations may afford for them room and food. Where this vast fecundity meets with a vacancy fitted to receive the species, there it operates with its whole effect; there it pours in its numbers, and replenishes the waste. We complain of what we call the exorbitant multiplication of some troublesome insects; not reflecting, that large portions of nature might be left void without it. If the accounts of travellers may be depended upon, immense tracts of forest in North America would be nearly lost to sensitive existence, if it were not for *gnats*. "In the thinly inhabited regions of America, in which the waters stagnate and the climate is warm, the whole air is filled with crowds of these insects." Thus it is, that where we looked for solitude and death-like silence, we meet with animation, activity, enjoyment; with a busy, a happy, and a peopled world. Again; hosts of *mice* are reckoned amongst the plagues of the north-east part of Europe; whereas vast plains in Siberia, as we learn from good authority, would be lifeless without them. The Caspian deserts are converted by their presence into crowded warrens. Between the Volga and the Yaik, and in the country of Hyrcania, the ground, says Pallas, is in many places *covered* with little hills, raised by the earth cast out in forming the burrows. Do we so envy these blissful abodes, as to pronounce the fecundity by which they are supplied with inhabitants, to be an evil: a subject of complaint, and not of praise? Farther, by virtue of this same superfecundity, what we term destruction, becomes, almost instantly, the parent of life. What we call blights, are, oftentimes, legions of animated beings, claiming their portion in the bounty of nature. What corrupts the produce of the earth to us, prepares it for them. And it is by means of their rapid multiplication, that they take possession of their pasture; a slow propagation would not meet the opportunity.

But in conjunction with the occasional use of this fruitfulness, we observe, also, that it allows the proportion between the several species of animals to be differently modified, as different purposes of utility may require. When the forests of America come to be cleared, and the swamps drained, our gnats will give place to other inhabitants. If the population of Europe

should spread to the north and the east, the mice will retire before the husbandman and the shepherd, and yield their station to herds and flocks. In what concerns the human species, it may be a part of the scheme of Providence, that the earth should be inhabited by a shifting, or perhaps a circulating population. In this economy, it is possible that there may be the following advantages: when old countries are become exceedingly corrupt, simpler modes of life, purer morals, and better institutions, may rise up in new ones, whilst fresh soils reward the cultivator with more plentiful returns. Thus the different portions of globe come into use in succession at the residence of man; and, in his absence, entertain other guests, which, by their sudden multiplication, fill the chasm. In domesticated animals, we find the effect of their fecundity to be, that we can always command *numbers;* we can always have as many of any particular species as we please, or as we can support. Nor do we complain of its excess; it being much more easy to regulate abundance, than to supply scarcity.

But then this *superfecundity*, though of great occasional use and importance, exceeds the ordinary capacity of nature to receive or support its progeny. All superabundance supposes destruction, or must destroy itself. Perhaps there is no species of terrestrial animals whatever, which would not overrun the earth, if it were permitted to multiply in perfect safety; or of fish, which would not fill the ocean: at least, if any single species were left to their natural increase without disturbance or restraint, the food of other species would be exhausted by their maintenance. It is necessary, therefore, that the effects of such prolific faculties be curtailed. In conjunction with other checks and limits, all subservient to the same purpose, are the *thinnings* which take place among animals, by their action upon one another. In some instances we ourselves experience, very directly, the use of these hostilities. One species of insects rids us of another species; or reduces their ranks. A third species, perhaps, keeps the second within bounds; and birds or lizards are a fence against the inordinate increase by which even these last might infest us. In other, more numerous, and possibly more important, instances, this disposition of things, although less necessary or useful to us, and of course less observed by us, may be necessary and useful to certain other species: or even for the preventing of the loss of certain species from the universe: a misfortune which seems to be studiously guarded against. Though there may be the appearance of failure in some of the details of Nature's works, in her great purposes there never are. Her species never fail. The provision which was originally made for continuing the replenishment of the world, has proved itself to be effectual through a long succession of ages.

What farther shows, that the system of destruction amongst animals holds an express relation to the system of fecundity; that they are parts indeed of one compensatory scheme; is, that, in each species, the fecundity bears a proportion to the smallness of the animal, to the weakness, to the shortness, of its natural term of life, and to the dangers and enemies by which it is surrounded. An elephant produces but one calf; a butterfly lays six hundred eggs. Birds of prey seldom produce more than two eggs: the sparrow tribe, and the duck tribe, frequently sit upon a dozen. In the rivers, we meet with a thousand minnows for one pike: in the sea, a million of herrings for a single shark. Compensation obtains throughout. Defencelessness and devastation are repaired by fecundity.

We have dwelt the longer on these considerations, because the subject to which they apply, namely, that of animals *devouring* one another, forms the chief, if not the only instance, in the works of the Deity, of an economy, stamped by marks of design, in which the character of utility can be called in question. The case of *venomous* animals is of much inferior consequence to the case of prey, and, in some degree, is also included under it. To both cases it is probable that many more reasons belong, than those of which we are in possession.

Our FIRST PROPOSITION, and that which we have hitherto been defending, was, "that, in a vast plurality of instances, in which *contrivance* is perceived, the design of the contrivance is beneficial."

Our SECOND PROPOSITION is, "that the Deity has added *pleasure* to animal sensations, beyond what was necessary for any other purpose, or when the purpose, so far as it was necessary, might have been effected by the operation of pain."

This proposition may be thus explained: The capacities, which, according to the established course of nature, are *necessary* to the support or preservation of an animal, however manifestly they may be the result of an organization contrived for the purpose, can only be deemed an act or a part of the same will, as that which decreed the existence of the animal itself; because, whether the creation proceeded from a benevolent or a malevolent being, these capacities must have been given, if the animal existed at all. Animal properties, therefore, which fall under this description, do not strictly prove the goodness of God: they may prove the existence of the Deity; they may prove a high degree of power and intelligence: but they do not prove his goodness; forasmuch as they must have been found in any creation which was capable of continuance, although it is possible to suppose, that such a creation might have been produced by a being whose views rested upon misery.

But there is a class of properties, which may be said to be superadded from an intention expressly directed to happiness; an intention to give a happy existence distinct from the general intention of providing the means of existence; and that is, of capacities for pleasure, in cases wherein, so far as the conversation of the individual or of the species is concerned, they were not wanted, or wherein the purpose might have been secured by the operation of pain. The provision which is made of a variety of objects, not necessary to life, and ministering only to our pleasures; and the properties given to the necessaries of life themselves, by which they contribute to pleasure as well as preservation; show a farther design, than that of giving existence.*

A single instance will make all this clear. Assuming the necessity of food for the support of

* See this topic considered in Dr. Balguy's Treatise upon the Divine Benevolence. This excellent author first, I think, proposed it; and nearly in the terms in which it is here stated. Some other observations also under this head are taken from that treatise.

animal life; it is requisite, that the animal be provided with organs, fitted for the procuring, receiving, and digesting, of its food. It may also be necessary, that the animal be impelled by its sensations to exert its organs. But the pain of hunger would do all this. Why add pleasure to the act of eating; sweetness and relish to food? why a new and appropriate sense for the perception of the pleasure? Why should the juice of a peach, applied to the palate, affect the part so differently from what it does when rubbed upon the palm of the hand? This is a constitution which, so far as appears to me, can be resolved into nothing but the pure benevolence of the Creator. Eating is necessary; but the pleasure attending it is not necessary: and that this pleasure depends, not only upon our being in possession of the sense of taste, which is different from every other, but upon a particular state of the organ in which it resides, a felicitous adaptation of the organ to the object, will be confessed by any one, who may happen to have experienced that vitiation of taste which frequently occurs in fevers, when every taste is irregular, and every one bad.

In mentioning the gratifications of the palate, it may be said that we have made choice of a trifling example. I am not of that opinion. They afford a share of enjoyment to man; but to brutes I believe that they are of very great importance. A horse at liberty passes a great part of his waking hours in eating. To the ox, the sheep, the deer, and other ruminating animals, the pleasure is doubled. Their whole time almost is divided between browsing upon their pasture and chewing their cud. Whatever the pleasure be, it is spread over a large portion of their existence. If there be animals, such as the lupous fish, which swallow their prey whole, and at once, without any time, as it should seem, for either drawing out, or relishing, the taste in the mouth, is it an improbable conjecture, that the seat of taste with them is in the stomach; or, at least, that a sense of pleasure, whether it be taste or not, accompanies the dissolution of the food in that receptacle, which dissolution in general is carried on very slowly? If this opinion be right, they are more than repaid for the defect of palate. The feast lasts as long as the digestion.

In seeking for argument, we need not stay to insist upon the comparative importance of our example; for the observation holds equally of all, or of three at least of the other senses. The necessary purpose of hearing might have been answered without harmony; of smell, without fragrance; of vision, without beauty. Now, "if the Deity had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune, (as all design by this supposition is excluded,) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to excite it." I allege these as *two* felicities, for they are different things, yet both necessary: the sense being formed, the objects, which were applied to it, might not have suited it; the objects being fixed, the sense might not have agreed with them. A coincidence is here required, which no accident can account for. There are three possible suppositions upon the subject, and no more. The first; that the sense, by its original constitution, was made to suit the object: the second; that the object, by its original constitution, was made to suit the sense: the third; that the sense is so constituted, as to be able, either universally, or within certain limits, by habit and familiarity, to render every object pleasant. Whichever of these suppositions we adopt, the effect evinces, on the part of the Author of nature, a studious benevolence. If the pleasures which we derive from any of our senses, depend upon an original congruity between the sense and the properties perceived by it, we know by experience, that the adjustment demanded, with respect to the qualities which were conferred upon the objects that surround us, not only choice and selection, out of a boundless variety of possible qualities with which these objects might have been endued, but a *proportioning also of degree*, because an excess or defect of intensity spoils the perception, as much almost as an error in the kind and nature of the quality. Likewise the degree of dulness or acuteness in the sense itself, is no arbitrary thing, but, in order to preserve the congruity here spoken of, requires to be in an exact or near correspondency with the strength of the impression. The dulness of the senses forms the complaint of old age: Persons in fevers, and, I believe, in most maniacal cases, experience great torment from their preternatural acuteness. An increased, no less than an impaired sensibility, induces a state of disease and suffering.

The doctrine of a specific congruity between animal senses and their objects, is strongly favoured by what is observed of insects in the election of their food. Some of these will feed upon one kind of plant or animal, and upon no other: some caterpillars upon the cabbage alone; some upon the black currant alone. The species of caterpillar which eats the vine, will starve upon the elder; nor will that which we find upon fennel, touch the rose-bush. Some insects confine themselves to two or three kinds of plants or animals. Some again show so strong a preference, as to afford reason to believe, that, though they may be driven by hunger to others, they are led by the pleasure of taste to a few particular plants alone: and all this, as it should seem, independently of habit or imitation.

But should we accept the third hypothesis, and even carry it so far, as to ascribe every thing which concerns the question to habit (as in certain species, the human species most particularly, there is reason to attribute something,) we have then before us an animal capacity, not less perhaps to be admired than the native congruities which the other scheme adopts. It cannot be shown to result from any fixed necessity in nature, that what is frequently applied to the senses should of course become agreeable to them. It is, so far as it subsists, a power of accommodation provided in these senses by the Author of their structure, and forms a part of their perfection.

In whichever way we regard the senses, they appear to be specific gifts, ministering, not only to preservation, but to pleasure. But what we usually call the *senses*, are probably themselves far from being the only vehicles of enjoyment, or the whole of our constitution which is calculated for the same purpose. We have many internal sensations of the most agreeable kind, hardly referable to any of the five senses. Some physiologists have holden, that all secretion is pleasurable; and that the complacency which in health, without any external assignable object to excite it, we derive from life itself, is the effect of our secretions going on well within us. All this may be true:

but if true, what reason can be assigned for it, except the will of the Creator? It may reasonably be asked, Why is any thing a pleasure? and I know no answer which can be returned to the question, but that which refers it to appointment.

We can give no account whatever of our pleasures in the simple and original perception; and, even when physical sensations are assumed, we can seldom account for them in the secondary and complicated shapes, in which they take the name of diversions. I never yet met with a sportsman, who could tell me in what the sport consisted; who could resolve it into its principle, and state that principle. I have been a great follower of fishing myself, and in its cheerful solitude have passed some of the happiest hours of a sufficiently happy life; but, to this moment, I could never trace out the source of the pleasure which it afforded me.

The "quantum in rebus inane!" whether applied to our amusements or to our graver pursuits (to which, in truth, it sometimes equally belongs,) is always an unjust complaint. If trifles engage, and if trifles make us happy, the true reflection suggested by the experiment, is upon the tendency of nature to gratification and enjoyment, which is, in other words, the goodness of its Author towards his sensitive creation.

Rational natures also, as such, exhibit qualities which help to confirm the truth of our position. The degree of understanding found in mankind, is usually much greater than what is necessary for mere preservation. The pleasure of choosing for themselves, and of prosecuting the object of their choice, should seem to be an original source of enjoyment. The pleasures received from things, great, beautiful, or new, from imitation, or from the liberal arts, are, in some measure, not only superadded, but unmixed, gratifications, having no pains to balance them.*

I do not know whether our attachment to *property* be not something more than the mere dictate of reason, or even than the mere effect of association. Property communicates a charm to whatever is the object of it. It is the first of our abstract ideas: it cleaves to us the closest and the longest. It endears to the child its plaything, to the peasant his cottage, to the landholder his estate. It supplies the place of prospect and scenery. Instead of coveting the beauty of distant situations, it teaches every man to find it in his own. It gives boldness and grandeur to plains and fens, tinge and colouring to clays and fallows.

All these considerations come in aid of our *second* proposition. The reader will now bear in mind what our two propositions were. They were, firstly, that in a vast plurality of instances, in which contrivance is perceived, the design of the contrivance is beneficial: secondly, that the Deity has added pleasure to animal sensations beyond what was necessary for any other purpose; or when the purpose, so far as it was necessary, might have been effected by the operation of pain.

Whilst these propositions can be maintained, we are authorized to ascribe to the Deity the character of benevolence: and what is benevolence at all, must in him be *infinite* benevolence, by reason of the infinite, that is to say, the incalculably great, number of objects, upon which it is exercised.

Of the ORIGIN OF EVIL, no universal solution has been discovered; I mean, no solution which reaches to all cases of complaint. The most comprehensive is that which arises from the consideration of *general rules*. We may, I think, without much difficulty, be brought to admit the four following points: first, that important advantages may accrue to the universe from the order of nature proceeding according to general laws: secondly, that general laws, however well set and constituted, often thwart and cross one another: thirdly, that from these thwartings and crossings, frequent particular inconveniences will arise: and fourthly, that it agrees with our observation to suppose, that some degree of these inconveniences takes place in the works of nature. These points may be allowed; and it may also be asserted, that the general laws with which we are acquainted, are directed to beneficial ends. On the other hand, with many of these laws we are not acquainted at all, or we are totally unable to trace them in their branches, and in their operation; the effect of which ignorance is, that they cannot be of importance to us as measures by which to regulate our conduct. The conservation of them may be of importance in other respects, or to other beings, but we are uninformed of their value or use; uninformed, consequently, when, and how far, they may or may not be suspended, or their effects turned aside, by a presiding and benevolent will, without incurring greater evils than those which would be avoided. The consideration, therefore, of general laws, although it may concern the question of the origin of evil very nearly (which I think it does,) rests in views disproportionate to our faculties, and in a knowledge which we do not possess. It serves rather to account for the obscurity of the subject, than to supply us with distinct answers to our difficulties. However, whilst we assent to the above-stated propositions as principles, whatever uncertainty we may find in the application, we lay a ground for believing, that cases of apparent evil, for which *we* can suggest no particular reason, are governed by reasons, which are more general, which lie deeper in the order of second causes, and which on that account are removed to a greater distance from us.

The doctrine of *imperfections*, or, as it is called, of evils of imperfection, furnishes an account, founded, like the former, in views of universal nature. The doctrine is briefly this:—It is probable, that creation may be better replenished by sensitive beings of different sorts, than by sensitive beings all of one sort. It is likewise probable, that it may be better replenished by different orders of beings rising one above another in gradation, than by beings possessed of equal degrees of perfection. Now, a gradation of such beings implies a gradation of imperfections. No class can justly complain of the imperfections which belong to its place in the scale, unless it were allowable for it to complain, that a scale of being was appointed in nature; for which appointment there appear to be reasons of wisdom and goodness.

In like manner, *finiteness*, or what is resolvable into finiteness, in inanimate subjects, can

* Balguy on the Divine Benevolence.

never be a just subject of complaint; because if it were ever so, it would be always so: we mean, that we can never reasonably demand that things should be larger or more, when the same demand might be made, whatever the quantity or number was.

And to me, it seems, that the sense of mankind has so far acquiesced in these reasons, as that we seldom complain of evils of this class, when we clearly perceive them to be such. What I have to add, therefore, is, that we ought not to complain of some other evils, which stand upon the same foot of vindication as evils of confessed imperfection. We never complain, that the globe of our earth is too small: nor should we complain, if it were even much smaller. But where is the difference to us, between a less globe, and part of the present being uninhabitable? The inhabitants of an island may be apt enough to murmur at the sterility of some parts of it, against its rocks, or sands, or swamps; but no one thinks himself authorized to murmur, simply because the island is not larger than it is. Yet these are the same griefs.

The above are the two metaphysical answers which have been given to this great question. They are not the worse for being metaphysical, provided they be founded (which I think they are) in right reasoning: but they are of a nature too wide to be brought under our survey, and it is often difficult to apply them in the detail. Our speculations, therefore, are perhaps better employed when they confine themselves within a narrower circle.

The observations which follow, are of this more limited, but more determinate, kind.

Of *bodily pain*, the principal observation, no doubt, is that which we have already made, and already dwelt upon, *viz.* "that it is seldom the object of contrivance; that when it is so, the contrivance rests ultimately in good."

To which, however, may be added, that the annexing of pain to the means of destruction, is a salutary provision; inasmuch as it teaches vigilance and caution; both gives notice of danger, and excites those endeavours which may be necessary to preservation. The evil consequence, which sometimes arises from the want of that timely intimation of danger which pain gives, is known to the inhabitants of cold countries by the example of frost-bitten limbs. I have conversed with patients who had lost toes and fingers by this cause. They have in general told me, that they were totally unconscious of any local uneasiness at the time. Some I have heard declare, that, whilst they were about their employment, neither their situation, nor the state of the air was unpleasant. They felt no pain; they suspected no mischief; till, by the application of warmth, they discovered, too late, the fatal injury which some of their extremities had suffered. I say that this shows the use of pain, and that we stand in need of such a monitor. I believe also that the use extends farther than we suppose, or can now trace; that to disagreeable sensations we, and all animals, owe, or have owed, many habits of action which are salutary, but which are become so familiar, as not easily to be referred to their origin.

Pain also itself is not without its *alleviations*. It may be violent and frequent; but it is seldom both violent and long-continued: and its pauses and intermissions become positive pleasures. It has the power of shedding a satisfaction over intervals of ease, which, I believe, few enjoyments exceed. A man resting from a fit of the stone or gout, is, for the time, in possession of feelings which undisturbed health cannot impart. They may be dearly bought, but still they are to be set against the price. And, indeed, it depends upon the duration and urgency of the pain, whether they be dearly bought or not. I am far from being sure, that a man is not a gainer by suffering a moderate interruption of bodily ease for a couple of hours out of the four-and-twenty. Two very common observations favour this opinion: one is, that remissions of pain call forth, from those who experience them, stronger expressions of satisfaction and of gratitude towards both the author and the instruments of their relief, than are excited by advantages of any other kind: the second is, that the spirits of sick men do not sink in proportion to the acuteness of their sufferings; but rather appear to be roused and supported, not by pain, but by the high degree of comfort which they derive from its cessation, or even its subsidency, whenever that occurs; and which they taste with a relish, that diffuses some portion of mental complacency over the whole of that mixed state of sensations in which disease has placed them.

In connexion with bodily pain may be considered bodily *disease*, whether painful or not. Few diseases are fatal. I have before me the account of a dispensary in the neighbourhood, which states six years' experience as follows:

Admitted - - - -	6420
Cured - - - - -	5476
Dead - - - - -	234

And this I suppose nearly to agree with what other similar institutions exhibit. Now, in all these cases, some disorder must have been felt, or the patients would not have applied for a remedy; yet we see how large a proportion of the maladies which were brought forward, have either yielded to proper treatment, or, what is more probable, ceased of their own accord. We owe these frequent recoveries, and, where recovery does not take place, this patience of the human constitution under many of the distempers by which it is visited, to two benefactions of our nature. One is, that she works within certain limits; allows of a certain latitude within which health may be preserved, and within the confines of which it only suffers a graduated diminution. Different quantities of food, different degrees of exercise, different portions of sleep, different states of the atmosphere, are compatible with the possession of health. So likewise it is with the secretions and excretions, with many internal functions of the body, and with the state, probably, of most of its internal organs. They may vary considerably, not only without destroying life, but without occasioning any high degree of inconveniency. The other property of our nature to which we are still more beholden, is its constant endeavour to restore itself, when disordered, to its regular course. The fluids of the body appear to possess a power of separating and expelling any noxious substance which may have mixed itself with them. This they do, in eruptive fevers, by a kind of despumation, as Sydenham calls it, analogous in some measure to the intestine action by which fermenting liquors work the yest to the surface. The solids, on their part, when their action is obstructed, not only resume their action, as soon as the ob-

struction is removed, but they struggle with the impediment. They take an action as near to the true one, as the difficulty and the disorganization, with which they have to contend, will allow of.

Of *mortal* diseases, the great use is to reconcile us to death. The horror of death proves the value of life. But it is in the power of disease to abate, or even extinguish, this horror: which it does in a wonderful manner, and, oftentimes, by a mild imperceptible gradation. Every man who has been placed in a situation to observe it, is surprised with the change which has been wrought in himself, when he compares the view which he entertains of death upon a sick-bed, with the heart-sinking dismay with which he should some time ago have met it in health. There is no similitude between the sensations of a man led to execution, and the calm expiring of a patient at the close of his disease. Death to him is only the last of a long train of changes; in his progress through which, it is possible that he may experience no shocks or sudden transitions.

Death itself, as a mode of removal and of succession, is so connected with the whole order of our animal world, that almost every thing in that world must be changed, to be able to do without it. It may seem likewise impossible to separate the fear of death from the enjoyment of life, or the perception of that fear from rational natures. Brutes are in a great measure delivered from all anxiety on this account by the inferiority of their faculties; or rather they seem to be armed with the apprehension of death just sufficiently to put them upon the means of preservation, and no farther. But would a human being wish to purchase this immunity at the expense of those mental powers which enable him to look forward to the future?

Death implies *separation:* and the loss of those whom we love, must necessarily, so far as we can conceive, be accompanied with pain. To the brute creation, nature seems to have stepped in with some secret provision for their relief, under the rupture of their attachments. In their instincts towards their offspring, and of their offspring, to them, I have often been surprised to observe how ardently they love, and how soon they forget. The pertinacity of human sorrow, (upon which, time also, at length, lays its softening hand,) is probably, therefore, in some manner connected with the qualities of our rational or moral nature. One thing however is clear, *viz.* that it is better that we should possess affections, the sources of so many virtues, and so many joys, although they be exposed to the incidents of life, as well as the interruptions of mortality, than, by the want of them, be reduced to a state of selfishness, apathy, and quietism.

Of other external evils, (still confining ourselves to what are called physical or natural evils,) a considerable part come within the scope of the following observation:—The great principle of human satisfaction is *engagement*. It is a most just distinction, which the late Mr. Tucker has dwelt upon so largely in his works, between pleasures in which we are passive, and pleasures in which we are active. And, I believe, every attentive observer of human life will assent to his position, that, however grateful the sensations may occasionally be in which we are passive, it is not these, but the latter class of our pleasures, which constitute satisfaction; which supply that regular stream of moderate and miscellaneous enjoyments, in which happiness, as distinguished from voluptuousness, consists. Now for rational occupation, which is, in other words, for the very material of contented existence, there would be no place left, if either the things with which we had to do were absolutely impracticable to our endeavours, or if they were too obedient to our uses. A world furnished with advantages on one side, and beset with difficulties, wants, and inconveniences, on the other, is the proper abode of free, rational, and active natures, being the fittest to stimulate and exercise their faculties. The very *refractoriness* of the objects they have to deal with contributes to this purpose. A world in which nothing depended upon ourselves, however it might have suited an imaginary race of beings, would not have suited mankind. Their skill, prudence, industry; their various arts, and their best attainments, from the application of which they draw, if not their highest, their most permanent gratifications, would be insignificant, if things could be either moulded by our volitions, or, of their own accord, conformed themselves to our views and wishes. Now it is in this refractoriness that we discern the seed and principle of *physical* evil, as far as it arises from that which is external to us.

Civil evils, or the evils of civil life, are much more easily disposed of, than physical evils; because they are, in truth, of much less magnitude, and also because they result, by a kind of necessity, not only from the constitution of our nature, but from a part of that constitution which no one would wish to see altered. The case is this: Mankind will in every country *breed up* to a certain point of distress. That point may be different in different countries or ages, according to the established usages of life in each. It will also shift upon the scale, so as to admit of a greater or less number of inhabitants, according as the quantity of provision, which is either produced in the country, or supplied to it from other countries, may happen to vary. But there must always be such a point, and the species will always breed up to it. The order of generation proceeds by something like a geometrical progression. The increase of provision, under circumstances even the most advantageous, can only assume the form of an arithmetic series. Whence it follows, that the population will always overtake the provision, will pass beyond the line of plenty, and will continue to increase, till checked by the difficulty of procuring subsistence.* Such difficulty therefore, along with its attendant circumstances, *must* be found in every old country: and these circumstances constitute what we call poverty, which, necessarily, imposes labour, servitude, restraint.

It seems impossible to people a country with inhabitants who shall be all easy in circumstances. For suppose the thing to be done, there would be such marrying and giving in marriage amongst them, as would in a few years change the face of affairs entirely, *i. e.* as would increase the consumption of those articles, which supplied the natural or habitual wants of the country, to such a degree of scarcity, as must leave the greatest part of the inhabitants unable to procure them without toilsome endeavours, or, out of the different kinds of these articles, to procure any kind

* See a statement of this subject, in a late treatise upon population.

except that which was most easily produced. And this, in fact, describes the condition of the mass of the community in all countries; a condition unavoidably, as it should seem, resulting from the provision which is made in the human, in common with all animal constitutions, for the perpetuity and multiplication of the species.

It need not however dishearten any endeavours for the public service, to know that population naturally treads upon the heels of improvement. If the condition of a people be meliorated, the consequence will be either that the *mean* happiness will be increased, or a greater number partake of it; or, which is most likely to happen, that both effects will take place together. There may be limits fixed by nature to both, but they are limits not yet attained, nor even approached, in any country of the world.

And when we speak of limits at all, we have respect only to provisions for animal wants. There are sources, and means, and auxiliaries, and augmentations, of human happiness, communicable without restriction of numbers; as capable of being possessed by a thousand persons as by one. Such are those, which flow from a mild, contrasted with a tyrannic government, whether civil or domestic; those which spring from religion; those which grow out of a sense of security; those which depend upon habits of virtue, sobriety, moderation, order; those, lastly, which are found in the possession of well-directed tastes and desires, compared with the dominion of tormenting, pernicious, contradictory, unsatisfied, and unsatisfiable passions.

The *distinctions* of civil life are apt enough to be regarded as evils, by those who sit under them; but, in my opinion, with very little reason.

In the first place, the advantages which the higher conditions of life are supposed to confer, bear no proportion in value to the advantages which are bestowed by nature. The gifts of nature always surpass the gifts of fortune. How much, for example, is activity better than attendance; beauty than dress: appetite, digestion, and tranquil bowels, than all the studies of cookery, or than the most costly compilation of forced or far-fetched dainties!

Nature has a strong tendency to equalization. Habit, the instrument of nature, is a great leveller; the familiarity which it induces, taking off the edge both of our pleasures and our sufferings. Indulgences which are habitual, keep us in ease, and cannot be carried much farther. So that, with respect to the gratifications of which the senses are capable, the difference is by no means proportionable to the apparatus. Nay, so far as superfluity generates fastidiousness, the difference is on the wrong side.

It is not necessary to contend, that the advantages derived from wealth are none, (under due regulations they are certainly considerable,) but that they are not greater than they ought to be. *Money* is the sweetener of human toil; the substitute for coercion; the reconciler of labour with liberty. It is, moreover, the stimulant of enterprize in all projects and undertakings, as well as of diligence in the most beneficial arts and employments. Now did affluence, when possessed, contribute nothing to the happiness, or nothing beyond the mere supply of necessaries; and the secret should come to be discovered; we might be in danger of losing great part of the uses, which are, at present, derived to us through this important medium. Not only would the tranquillity of social life be put in peril by the want of a motive to attach men to their private concerns: but the satisfaction which all men receive from success in their respective occupations, which collectively constitutes the great mass of human comfort, would be done away in its very principle.

With respect to *station*, as it is distinguished from riches, whether it confer authority over others, or be invested with honours which apply solely to sentiment and imagination, the truth is, that what is gained by rising through the ranks of life, is not more than sufficient to draw forth the exertions of those who are engaged in the pursuits which lead to advancement, and which, in general, are such as ought to be encouraged. Distinctions of this sort are subjects much more of competition than of enjoyment: and in that competition their use consists. It is not, as hath been rightly observed, by what the *lord mayor* feels in his coach, but by what the *apprentice* feels who gazes at him, that the public is served.

As we approach the summits of human greatness, the comparison of good and evil, with respect to personal comfort, becomes still more problematical; even allowing to ambition all its pleasures. The poet asks, "What is grandeur, what is power:" The philosopher answers, "Constraint and plague: *'et in maximâ quâque fortunâ minimum licere.*" One very common error misleads the opinion of mankind on this head, *viz.* that, universally, authority is pleasant, submission painful. In the general course of human affairs, the very reverse of this is nearer to the truth. Command is anxiety, obedience ease.

Artificial distinctions sometimes promote real equality. Whether they be hereditary, or be the homage paid to office, or the respect attached by public opinion to particular professions, they serve to *confront* that grand unavoidable distinction which arises from property, and which is most overbearing where there is no other. It is of the nature of property, not only to be irregularly distributed, but to run into large masses. Public laws should be so constructed as to favour its diffusion as much as they can. But all that can be done by laws, consistently with that degree of government of his property which ought to be left to the subject, will not be sufficient to counteract this tendency. There must always therefore be the difference between rich and poor: and this difference will be the more grinding, when no pretension is allowed to be set up against it.

So that the evils, if evils they must be called, which spring either from the necessary subordinations of civil life, or from the distinctions which have, naturally, though not necessarily, grown up in most societies, so long as they are unaccompanied by privileges injurious or oppressive to the rest of the community, are such, as may, even by the most depressed ranks, be endured with very little prejudice to their comfort.

The mischiefs of which mankind are the occasion to one another, by their private wickedness and cruelties, by tyrannical exercises of power; by rebellions against just authority; by wars; by national jealousies and competitions operating to the destruction of third countries; or by other instances of misconduct either in individuals or societies, are all to be resolved into the character of man as a *free agent*. Free agency in its very essence con-

tains liability to abuse. Yet, if you deprive man of his free agency, you subvert his nature. You may have order from him and regularity, as you may from the tides or the trade-winds, but you put an end to his moral character, to virtue, to merit, to accountableness, to the use indeed of reason. To which must be added the observation, that even the bad qualities of mankind have an origin in their good ones. The case is this: Human passions are either necessary to human welfare, or capable of being made, and, in a great majority of instances, in fact made, conducive to its happiness. These passions are strong and general; and, perhaps, would not answer their purpose unless they were so. But strength and generality, when it is expedient that particular circumstances should be respected, become, if left to themselves, excess and misdirection. From which excess and misdirection, the vices of mankind (the causes, no doubt, of much misery) appear to spring. This account, whilst it shows us the principle of vice, shows us, at the same time, the province of reason and of self-government: the want also of every support which can be procured to either from the aids of religion; and it shows this, without having recourse to any native, gratuitous malignity, in the human constitution. Mr. Hume, in his posthumous dialogues, asserts, indeed, of *idleness*, or aversion to labour, (which he states to lie at the root of a considerable part of the evils which mankind suffer,) that it is simply and merely bad. But how does he distinguish idleness from the love of ease? or is he sure, that the love of ease in individuals is not the chief foundation of social tranquillity? It will be found, I believe, to be true, that in every community there is a large class of its members, whose idleness is the best quality about them, being the corrective of other bad ones. If it were possible, in every instance, to give a right determination to industry, we could never have too much of it. But this is not possible, if men are to be free. And without this, nothing would be so dangerous, as an incessant, universal, indefatigable activity. In the civil world, as well as in the material, it is the *vis inertiæ* which keeps things in their places.

NATURAL THEOLOGY has ever been pressed with this question: Why, under the regency of the supreme and benevolent Will, should there be in the world, so much, as there is, of the appearance of *chance?*

The question in its whole compass lies beyond our reach: but there are not wanting, as in the origin of evil, answers which seem to have considerable weight in particular cases, and also to embrace a considerable number of cases.

I. There must be *chance* in the midst of design: by which we mean, that events which are not designed, necessarily arise from the pursuit of events which are designed. One man travelling to York, meets another man travelling to London. Their meeting is by chance, is accidental, and so would be called and reckoned, though the journeys which produced the meeting were, both of them, undertaken with design and from deliberation. The meeting, though accidental, was nevertheless hypothetically necessary (which is the only sort of necessity that is intelligible:) for if the two journeys were commenced at the time, pursued in the direction, and with the speed, in which and with which, they were in fact begun and performed, the meeting could not be avoided. There was not, therefore, the less necessity in it for its being by chance. Again, the rencounter might be most unfortunate, though the errands, upon which each party set out upon his journey, were the most innocent or the most laudable. The bye effect may be unfavourable, without impeachment of the proper purpose, for the sake of which the train, from the operation of which these consequences ensued, was put in motion. Although no cause act without a good purpose; accidental consequences, like these, may be either good or bad.

II. The *appearance of chance* will always bear a proportion to the ignorance of the observer. The cast of a die as regularly follows the laws of motion, as the going of a watch; yet, because we can trace the operation of those laws through the works and movements of the watch, and cannot trace them in the shaking and throwing of the die (though the laws be the same, and prevail equally in both cases,) we call the turning up of the number of the die chance, the pointing of the index of the watch, machinery, order, or by some name which excludes chance. It is the same in those events which depend upon the will of a free and rational agent. The verdict of a jury, the sentence of a judge, the resolution of an assembly, the issue of a contested election, will have more or less of the appearance of chance, might be more or less the subject of a wager, according as we were less or more acquainted with the reasons which influenced the deliberation. The difference resides in the information of the observer, and not in the thing itself; which, in all the cases proposed, proceeds from intelligence, from mind, from counsel, from design.

Now when this one cause of the appearance of chance, *viz.* the ignorance of the observer, comes to be applied to the operations of the Deity, it is easy to foresee how fruitful it must prove of difficulties and of seeming confusion. It is only to think of the Deity, to perceive what variety of objects, what distance of time, what extent of space and action, his counsels may, or rather must, comprehend. Can it be wondered at, that, of the purposes which dwell in such a mind as this, so small a part should be known to us? It is only necessary, therefore, to bear in our thought, that in proportion to the inadequateness of our information, will be the quantity, in the world, of apparent chance.

III. In a great variety of cases, and of cases comprehending numerous subdivisions, it appears, for many reasons, to be better that events rise up by *chance*, or more properly speaking with the appearance of chance, than according to any observable rule whatever. This is not seldom the case even in human arrangements. Each person's place and precedency, in a public meeting, may be determined by *lot*. Work and labour may be *allotted*. Tasks and burdens may be *allotted*.

——Operumque laborem
Partibus æquabat justis, aut *sorte* trahebat.

Military service and station may be *allotted*. The distribution of provision may be made by *lot*, as it is in a sailor's mess; in some cases also, the distribution of favours may be made by *lot*. In all these cases, it seems to be acknowledged, that there

are advantages in permitting events to chance, superior to those, which would or could arise from regulation. In all these cases also, though events rise up in the way of chance, it is by appointment that they do so.

In other events, and such as are independent of human will, the reasons for this preference of uncertainty to rule, appear to be still stronger. For example: it seems to be expedient that the period of human life should be *uncertain*. Did mortality follow any fixed rule, it would produce a security in those that were at a distance from it, which would lead to the greatest disorders; and a horror in those who approached it, similar to that which a condemned prisoner feels on the night before his execution. But, that death be uncertain, the young must sometimes die as well as the old. Also were deaths never *sudden*, they who are in health would be too confident of life. The strong and the active, who want most to be warned and checked, would live without apprehension or restraint. On the other hand, were sudden deaths very frequent, the sense of constant jeopardy would interfere too much with the degree of ease and enjoyment intended for us; and human life be too precarious for the business and interests which belong to it. There could not be dependance either upon our own lives, or the lives of those with whom we were connected, sufficient to carry on the regular offices of human society. The manner, therefore, in which death is made to occur, conduces to the purposes of admonition, without overthrowing the necessary stability of human affairs.

Disease being the forerunner of death, there is the same reason for its attacks coming upon us under the appearance of chance, as there is for uncertainty in the time of death itself.

The *seasons* are a mixture of regularity and chance. They are regular enough to authorize expectation, whilst their being, in a considerable degree, irregular, induces, on the part of the cultivators of the soil, a necessity for personal attendance, for activity, vigilance, precaution. It is this necessity which creates farmers; which divides the profit of the soil between the owner and the occupier; which by requiring expedients, by increasing employment, and by rewarding expenditure, promotes agricultural arts, and agricultural life, of all modes of life, the best, being the most conducive to health, to virtue, to enjoyment. I believe it to be found in fact, that where the soil is the most fruitful, and the seasons the most constant, there the condition of the cultivators of the earth is most depressed. Uncertainty, therefore, has its use even to those who sometimes complain of it the most. Seasons of scarcity themselves are not without their advantages. They call forth new exertions; they set contrivance and ingenuity at work; they give birth to improvements in agriculture and economy; they promote the investigation and management of public resources.

Again; there are strong intelligible reasons, why there should exist in human society great disparity of *wealth* and *station;* not only as these things are acquired in different degrees, but at the first setting out of life. In order, for instance, to answer the various demands of civil life, there ought to be amongst the members of every civil society a diversity of education, which can only belong to an original diversity of circumstances. As this sort of disparity, which ought to take place from the beginning of life, must, *ex hypothesi*, be previous to the merit or demerit of the persons upon whom it falls, can it be better disposed of than by chance? *Parentage* is that sort of chance: yet it is the commanding circumstance which in general fixes each man's place in civil life, along with every thing which appertains to its distinctions. It may be the result of a beneficial rule, that the fortunes or honours of the father devolve upon the son; and, as it should seem, of a still more necessary rule, that the low or laborious condition of the parent be communicated to his family; but with respect to the successor himself, it is the drawing of a ticket in a lottery. Incqualities, therefore, of fortune, at least the greatest part of them, *viz.* those which attend us from our birth, and depend upon our birth, may be left, as they are left, to *chance*, without any just cause for questioning the regency of a supreme Disposer of events.

But not only the donation, when by the necessity of the case they must be gifts, but even the *acquirability* of civil advantages, ought, perhaps, in a considerable degree, to lie at the mercy of chance. Some would have all the virtuous rich, or, at least, removed from the evils of poverty, without perceiving, I suppose, the consequence, that all the poor must be wicked. And how such a society could be kept in subjection to government has not been shown: for the poor, that is, they who seek their subsistence by constant manual labour, must still form the mass of the community; otherwise the necessary labour of life could not be carried on; the work would not be done, which the wants of mankind in a state of civilization, and still more in a state of refinement, require to be done.

It appears to be also true, that the exigencies of social life call not only for an original diversity of *external* circumstances, but for a mixture of different faculties, tastes, and tempers. Activity and contemplation, restlessness and quiet, courage and timidity, ambition and contentedness, not to say even indolence and dulness, are wanted in the world, all conduce to the well going on of human affairs, just as the rudder, the sails, and the ballast, of a ship, all perform their part in the navigation. Now, since these characters require for their foundation different original talents, different dispositions, perhaps also different bodily constitutions; and since, likewise, it is apparently expedient, that they be promiscuously scattered amongst the different classes of society: can the distribution of talents, dispositions, and the constitutions upon which they depend, be better made than by *chance?*

The *opposites* of apparent chance, are constancy and sensible interposition; every degree of *secret* direction being consistent with it. Now, of *constancy*, or of fixed and known rules, we have seen in some cases the inapplicability: and inconveniencies which we do not see, might attend their application in other cases.

Of *sensible* interposition, we may be permitted to remark, that a Providence, always and certainly distinguishable, would be neither more nor less than miracles rendered frequent and common. It is difficult to judge of the state into which this would throw us. It is enough to say, that it would cast us upon a quite different dispensation from that under which we live. It would be a total and radical change. And the change would deeply

affect, or perhaps subvert, the whole conduct of human affairs. I can readily believe, that, other circumstances being adapted to it, such a state might be better than our present state. It may be the state of other beings; it may be ours hereafter. But the question with which we are now concerned is, how far it would be consistent with our condition, supposing it in other respects to remain as it is? And in this question there seem to be reasons of great moment on the negative side. For instance: so long as bodily labour continues, on so many accounts, to be necessary for the bulk of mankind, any dependency upon supernatural aid, by unfixing those motives which promote exertion, or by relaxing those habits which engender patient industry, might introduce negligence, inactivity, and disorder, into the most useful occupations of human life; and thereby deteriorate the condition of human life itself.

As moral agents, we should experience a still greater alteration; of which more will be said under the next article.

Although therefore the Deity, who possesses the power of winding and turning, as he pleases, the course of causes which issue from himself, do in fact interpose to alter or intercept effects, which without such interposition would have taken place; yet it is by no means incredible, that his providence, which always rests upon final good, may have made a *reserve* with respect to the manifestation of his interference, a part of the very plan which he has appointed for our terrestrial existence, and a part conformable with, or, in some sort, required by, other parts of the same plan. It is at any rate evident, that a large and ample province remains for the exercise of Providence, without its being naturally perceptible by us; because obscurity, when applied to the interruption of laws, bears a necessary proportion to the imperfection of our knowledge when applied to the laws themselves, or rather to the effects which these laws, under their various and incalculable combinations, would of their own accord produce. And if it be said, that the doctrine of Divine Providence, by reason of the ambiguity under which its exertions present themselves, can be attended with no *practical* influence upon our conduct; that, although we believe ever so firmly that there is a Providence, we must prepare, and provide, and act, as if there were none: I answer, that this is admitted; and that we farther allege, that so to prepare, and so to provide, is consistent with the most perfect assurance of the reality of a Providence: and not only so, but that it is probably, one advantage of the present state of our information, that our provisions and preparations are not disturbed by it. Or if it be still asked, of what use at all then is the doctrine, if it neither alter our measures nor regulate our conduct? I answer again, that it is of the greatest use, but that it is a doctrine of sentiment and piety, not (immediately at least) of action or conduct; that it applies to the consolation of men's minds, to their devotions, to the excitement of gratitude, the support of patience, the keeping alive and the strengthening of every motive for endeavouring to please our Maker; and that these are great uses.

Of all views under which human life has ever been considered, the most reasonable in my judgment is that, which regards it as a state of *probation*. If the course of the world was separated from the contrivances of nature, I do not know that it would be necessary to look for any other account of it, than what, if it may be called an account, is contained in the answer, that events rise up by chance. But since the contrivances of nature decidedly evince *intention;* and since the course of the world and the contrivances of nature have the same author; we are, by the force of this connexion, led to believe, that the appearance, under which events take place, is reconcilable with the supposition of design on the part of the Deity. It is enough that they be reconcilable with this supposition; and it is undoubtedly true, that they may be reconcilable, though we cannot reconcile them. The mind, however, which contemplates the works of nature, and, in those works, sees so much of means directed to ends, of beneficial effects brought about by wise expedients, of concerted trains of causes terminating in the happiest results; so much, in a word, of counsel, intention, and benevolence; a mind, I say, drawn into the habit of thought which these observations excite, can hardly turn its view to the condition of our own species, without endeavouring to suggest to itself some purpose, some design, for which the state in which we are placed is fitted, and which it is made to serve. Now we assert the most probable supposition to be, that it is a state of moral probation; and that many things in it suit with this hypothesis, which suit no other. It is not a state of unmixed happiness, or of happiness simply: it is not a state of designed misery, or of misery simply: it is not a state of retribution: it is not a state of punishment. It suits with none of these suppositions. It accords much better with the idea of its being a condition calculated for the production, exercise, and improvement of moral qualities, with a view to a future state, in which these qualities, after being so produced, exercised, and improved, may, by a new and more favouring constitution of things, receive their reward, or become their own. If it be said, that this is to enter upon a religious rather than a philosophical consideration; I answer, that the name of Religion ought to form no objection, if it shall turn out to be the case, that the more religious our views are, the more probability they contain. The degree of beneficence, of benevolent intention, and of power, exercised in the construction of sensitive beings, goes strongly in favour, not only of a creative, but of a continuing care, that is, of a ruling Providence. The degree of chance which appears to prevail in the world, requires to be reconciled with this hypothesis. Now it is one thing to maintain the doctrine of Providence along with that of a future state, and another thing without it. In my opinion the two doctrines must stand or fall together. For although more of this apparent chance may perhaps, upon other principles, be accounted for, than is generally supposed, yet a future state alone rectifies all disorders: and if it can be shown, that the appearance of disorder is consistent with the uses of life as a *preparatory* state, or that in some respects it promotes these uses, then, so far as this hypothesis may be accepted, the ground of the difficulty is done away.

In the wide scale of human condition there is not perhaps one of its manifold diversities, which does not bear upon the design here suggested. Virtue is infinitely various. There is no situation in which a rational being is placed, from that of the best instructed Christian, down to the condition of the rudest barbarian, which affords

not room for moral agency; for the acquisition, exercise, and display of voluntary qualities, good and bad. Health and sickness, enjoyment and suffering, riches and poverty, knowledge and ignorance, power and subjection, liberty and bondage, civilization and barbarity, have all their offices and duties, all serve for the *formation* of character; for when we speak of a state of trial, it must be remembered, that characters are not only tried, or proved, or detected, but that they are generated also, and *formed*, by circumstances. The best dispositions may subsist under the most depressed, the most afflicted fortunes. A West-Indian slave, who, amidst his wrongs, retains his benevolence, I, for my part, look upon as amongst the foremost of human candidates for the rewards of virtue. The kind master of such a slave, that is, he who, in the exercise of an inordinate authority, postpones, in any degree, his own interest to his slave's comfort, is likewise a meritorious character; but still he is inferior to his slave. All however which I contend for, is, that these destinies, opposite as they may be in every other view, are both *trials;* and equally such. The observation may be applied to every other condition; to the whole range of the scale, not excepting even its lowest extremity. *Savages* appear to us all alike; but it is owing to the distance at which we view savage life that we perceive in it no discrimination of character. I make no doubt, but that moral qualities, both good and bad, are called into action as much, and that they subsist in as great variety, in these inartificial societies, as they are, or do, in polished life. Certain at least it is, that the good and ill treatment which each individual meets with, depends more upon the choice and voluntary conduct of those about him, than it does or ought to do, under regular civil institutions, and the coercion of public laws. So again, to turn our eyes to the other end of the scale; namely, that part of it which is occupied by mankind enjoying the benefits of learning, together with the lights of revelation; there also, the advantage is all along *probationary*. Christianity itself, I mean the revelation of Christianity, is not only a blessing, but a trial. It is one of the diversified means by which the character is exercised: and they who require of Christianity, that the revelation of it should be universal, may possibly be found to require, that one species of probation should be adopted, if not to the exclusion of others, at least to the narrowing of that variety which the wisdom of the Deity hath appointed to this part of his moral economy.*

Now if this supposition be well founded; that is, if it be true, that our ultimate, or our most permanent happiness, will depend, not upon the temporary condition into which we are cast, but upon our behaviour in it; then is it a much more fit subject of *chance* than we usually allow or apprehend it to be, in what manner the variety of external circumstances, which subsist in the human world, is distributed amongst the individuals of the species. "This life being a state of probation, it is immaterial," says Rousseau, "what kind of trials we experience in it, provided they produce their effects." Of two agents who stand indifferent to the moral Governor of the universe, one may be exercised by riches, the other by poverty. The treatment of these two shall appear to be very opposite, whilst in truth it is the same: for though, in many respects, there be great disparity between the conditions assigned, in one main article there may be none, *viz.* in that they are alike trials; have both their duties and temptations, not less arduous or less dangerous in one case than the other; so that if the final award follow the character, the original distribution of the circumstances under which that character is formed, may be defended upon principles not only of justice but of equality. What hinders, therefore, but that mankind may draw lots for their condition? They take their portion of faculties and opportunities, as any unknown cause, or concourse of causes, or as causes acting for other purposes, may happen to set them out; but the event is governed by that which depends upon themselves, the application of what they have received. In dividing the talents, no rule was observed; none was necessary: in rewarding the use of them, that of the most correct justice. The chief difference at last appears to be that the right use of more talents, *i. e.* of a greater trust, will be more highly rewarded, than the right use of fewer talents, *i. e.* of a less trust. And since, for other purposes, it is expedient that there be an inequality of concredited talents here, as well, probably, as an inequality of conditions hereafter, though all remuneratory; can any rule, adapted to that inequality, be more agreeable, even to our apprehensions of distributive justice, than this is?

We have said, that the appearance of *casualty*, which attends the occurrences and events of life, not only does not interfere with its uses, as a state of probation, but that it promotes these uses.

Passive virtues, of all others the severest and the most sublime; of all others, perhaps, the most acceptable to the Deity; would, it is evident, be excluded from a constitution, in which happiness and misery regularly followed virtue and vice. Patience and composure under distress, affliction, and pain; a steadfast keeping up of our confidence in God, and of our reliance upon his final goodness, at the time when every thing present is adverse and discouraging; and (what is no less difficult to retain) a cordial desire for the happiness of others, even when we are deprived of our own: these dispositions, which constitute, perhaps, the perfection of our moral nature, would not have found their proper office and object in a state of avowed retribution; and in which, consequently, endurance of evil would be only submission to punishment.

Again: one man's sufferings may be another man's trial. The family of a sick parent is a school of filial piety. The charities of domestic life, and not only these, but all the social virtues, are called out by distress. But then, misery, to be the proper object of mitigation, or of that benevolence which endeavours to relieve, must be really or apparently casual. It is upon such sufferings alone that benevolence can operate. For were there no evils in the world but what were punishments, properly and intelligibly such, be-

* The reader will observe, that I speak of the revelation of Christianity as distinct from Christianity itself. The *dispensation* may already be universal. That part of mankind which never heard of Christ's name, may nevertheless be redeemed, that is, be placed in a better condition, with respect to their future state, by his intervention; may be the objects of his benignity and intercession, as well as of the propitiatory virtue of his passion. But this is not "natural theology;" therefore I will not dwell longer upon it.

nevolence would only stand in the way of justice. Such evils, consistently with the administration of moral government, could not be prevented or alleviated: that is to say, could not be remitted in whole or in part, except by the authority which inflicted them, or by an appellate or superior authority. This consideration, which is founded in our most acknowledged apprehensions of the nature of penal justice, may possess its weight in the divine counsels. Virtue perhaps is the greatest of all ends. In human beings, relative virtues form a large part of the whole. Now relative virtue presupposes, not only the existence of evil, without which it could have no object, no material, to work upon, but that evils be, apparently at least, *misfortunes;* that is, the effects of apparent chance. It may be in pursuance, therefore, and in furtherance of the same scheme of probation, that the evils of life are made *so* to present themselves.

I have already observed, that when we let in religious considerations, we often let in light upon the difficulties of nature. So in the fact now to be accounted for, the *degree* of happiness, which we usually enjoy in this life, may be better suited to a state of trial and probation, than a greater degree would be. The truth is, we are rather too much delighted with the world, than too little. Imperfect, broken, and precarious, as our pleasures are, they are more than sufficient to attach us to the eager pursuit of them. A regard to a *future* state can hardly keep its place as it is. If we were designed, therefore, to be influenced by that regard, might not a more indulgent system, a higher, or more uninterrupted state of gratification, have interfered with the design! At least it seems expedient, that mankind should be susceptible of this influence, when presented to them: that the condition of the world should not be such as to exclude its operation, or even to weaken it more than it does. In a religious view, (however we may complain of them in every other,) privation, disappointment, and satiety, are not without the most salutary tendencies.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Conclusion.

In all cases, wherein the mind feels itself in danger of being confounded by variety, it is sure to rest upon a few strong points, or perhaps upon a single instance. Amongst a multitude of proofs it is *one* that does the business. If we observe in any argument, that hardly two minds fix upon the same instance, the diversity of choice shows the strength of the argument, because it shows the number and competition of the examples. There is no subject in which the tendency to dwell upon select or single topics is so usual, because there is no subject, of which, in its full extent, the latitude is so great, as that of natural history applied to the proof of an intelligent Creator. For my part, I take my stand in human anatomy; and the examples of mechanism I should be apt to draw out from the copious catalogue which it supplies, are the pivot upon which the head turns, the ligament within the socket of the hip-joint, the pully or trochlear muscles of the eye, the epiglottis, the bandages which tie down the tendons of the wrist and instep, the slit or perforated muscles at the hands and feet, the knitting of the intestines to the mesentery, the course of the chyle into the blood, and the constitution of the sexes as extended throughout the whole of the animal creation. To these instances, the reader's memory will go back, as they are severally set forth in their places; there is not one of the number which I do not think decisive; not one which is not strictly mechanical: nor have I read or heard of any solution of these appearances, which, in the smallest degree, shakes the conclusion that we build upon them.

But, of the greatest part of those, who, either in this book or any other, read arguments to prove the existence of a God, it will be said, that they leave off only where they began; that they were never ignorant of this great truth, never doubted of it; that it does not therefore appear, what is gained by researches from which no new opinion is learnt, and upon the subject of which no proofs were wanted. Now I answer that, by *investigation*, the following points are always gained, in favour of doctrines even the most generally acknowledged, (supposing them to be true,) *viz.* stability and impression. Occasions will arise to try the firmness of our most habitual opinions. And upon these occasions, it is a matter of incalculable use to feel our foundation; to find a support in argument for what we had taken up upon authority. In the present case, the arguments upon which the conclusion rests, are exactly such, as a truth of universal concern ought to rest upon. "They are sufficiently open to the views, and capacities of the unlearned, at the same time that they acquire new strength and lustre from the discoveries of the learned." If they had been altogether abstruse and recondite, they would not have found their way to the understandings of the mass of mankind; if they had been merely popular, they might have wanted solidity.

But, secondly, what is gained by research in the stability of our conclusion, is also gained from it in *impression*. Physicians tell us, that there is a great deal of difference between taking a medicine, and the medicine getting into the constitution. A difference not unlike which, obtains with respect to those great moral propositions, which ought to form the directing principles of human conduct. It is one thing to assent to a proposition of this sort; another, and a very different thing, to have properly imbibed its influence. I take the case to be this: perhaps almost every man living has a particular train of thought, into which his mind glides and falls, when at leisure from the impressions and ideas that occasionally excite it; perhaps, also, the train of thought here spoken of, more than any other thing, determines the character. It is of the utmost consequence, therefore, that this property of our constitution be well regulated. Now it is by frequent or continued meditation upon a subject, by placing a subject in different points of view, by induction of particulars, by variety of examples, by applying principles to the solution of phenomena, by dwelling upon proofs and consequences, that mental exercise is drawn into any particular channel. It is by these means, at least, that we have any power over it. The train of spontaneous thought, and the choice of that train, may be directed to different ends, and may appear to be more or less judiciously fixed, according to the purpose, in respect of which

we consider it: but in a *moral view*, I shall not, I believe, be contradicted when I say, that if one train of thinking be more desirable than another, it is that which regards the phenomena of nature with a constant reference to a supreme intelligent Author. To have made this the ruling, the habitual sentiment of our minds, is to have laid the foundation of every thing which is religious. The world thenceforth becomes a temple, and life itself one continued act of adoration. The change is no less than this: that, whereas formerly God was seldom in our thoughts, we can now scarcely look upon any thing without perceiving its relation to him. Every organized natural body, in the provisions which it contains for its sustentation and propagation, testifies a care, on the part of the Creator, expressly directed to these purposes. We are on all sides surrounded by such bodies; examined in their parts, wonderfully curious; compared with one another, no less wonderfully diversified. So that the mind, as well as the eye, may either expatiate in variety and multitude, or fix itself down to the investigation of particular divisions of the science. And in either case it will rise up from its occupation, possessed by the subject in a very different manner, and with a very different degree of influence, from what a mere assent to any verbal proposition which can be formed concerning the existence of the Deity, at least that merely complying assent with which those about us are satisfied, and with which we are too apt to satisfy ourselves, will or can produce upon the thoughts. More especially may this difference be perceived, in the degree of admiration and of awe, with which the Divinity is regarded, when represented to the understanding by its own remarks, its own reflections, and its own reasonings, compared with what is excited by any language that can be used by others. The works of nature want only to be contemplated. When contemplated, they have every thing in them which can astonish by their greatness; for of the vast scale of operation through which our discoveries carry us, at one end we see an intelligent Power arranging planetary systems, fixing, for instance, the trajectory of *Saturn*, or constructing a ring of two hundred thousand miles diameter, to surround his body, and be suspended like a magnificent arch over the heads of his inhabitants; and, at the other, bending a hooked tooth, concerting and providing an appropriate mechanism, for the clasping and reclasping of the filaments of the feather of the humming-bird. We have proof, not only of both these works proceeding from an intelligent agent, but of their proceeding from the same agent: for, in the first place, we can trace an identity of plan, a connexion of system, from Saturn to our own globe: and when arrived upon our globe, we can, in the second place, pursue the connexion through all the organized, especially the animated, bodies which it supports. We can observe marks of a common relation, as well to one another, as to the elements of which their habitation is composed. Therefore one mind hath planned, or at least hath prescribed, a general plan for all these productions. One Being hath been concerned in all.

Under this stupendous Being we live. Our happiness, our existence, is in his hands. All we expect must come from him. Nor ought we to feel our situation insecure. In every nature, and in every portion of nature, which we can descry, we find attention bestowed upon even the minutest parts. The hinges in the wings of an *earwig*, and the joints of its antennæ, are as highly wrought, as if the Creator had nothing else to finish. We see no signs of diminution of care by multiplicity of objects, or of distraction of thought by variety. We have no reason to fear, therefore, our being forgotten, or overlooked, or neglected.

The existence and character of the Deity, is in every view, the most interesting of all human speculations. In none, however, is it more so, than as it facilitates the belief of the fundamental articles of *Revelation*. It is a step to have it proved, that there must be something in the world more than what we see. It is a farther step to know, that, amongst the invisible things of nature, there must be an intelligent mind, concerned in its production, order, and support. These points being assured to us by Natural Theology, we may well leave to Revelation the disclosure of many particulars, which our researches cannot reach, respecting either the nature of this Being, as the original cause of all things, or his character and designs as a moral governor: and not only so, but the more full confirmation of other particulars, of which, though they do not lie altogether beyond our reasonings and our probabilities, the certainty is by no means equal to the importance. The true theist will be the first to listen to *any* credible communication of Divine knowledge. Nothing which he has learnt from Natural Theology, will diminish his desire of farther instruction, or his disposition to receive it with humility and thankfulness. He wishes for light: he rejoices in light. His inward veneration of this great Being will incline him to attend with the utmost seriousness, not only to all that can be discovered concerning him by researches into nature, but to all that is taught by a revelation, which gives reasonable proof of having proceeded from him.

But, above every other article of revealed religion, does the anterior belief of a Deity bear with the strongest force upon that grand point, which gives indeed interest and importance to all the rest —the resurrection of the human dead. The thing might appear hopeless, did we not see a power at work, adequate to the effect, a power under the guidance of an intelligent will, and a power penetrating the inmost recesses of all substance. I am far from justifying the opinion of those, who "thought it a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead:" but I admit, that it is first necessary to be persuaded that there *is* a God, to do so. This being thoroughly settled in our minds, there seems to be nothing in this process (concealed as we confess it to be) which need to shock our belief. They who have taken up the opinion, that the acts of the human mind depend upon *organization*, that the mind itself indeed consists in organization, are supposed to find a greater difficulty than others do, in admitting a transition by death to a new state of sentient existence, because the old organization is apparently dissolved. But I do not see that any impracticability need be apprehended even by these; or that the change, even upon their hypothesis, is far removed from the analogy of some other operations, which we know with certainty that the Deity is carrying on. In the ordinary derivation of plants and animals, from one another, a particle, in many cases, minuter than all assignable, all conceivable dimension; an aura, an effluvium, an

infinitesimal; determines the organization of a future body: does no less than fix, whether that which is about to be produced, shall be a vegetable, a merely sentient, or a rational being; an oak, a frog, or a philospher; makes all these differences; gives to the future body its qualities, and nature and species. And this particle, from which springs, and by which is determined, a whole future nature, itself proceeds from, and owes its constitution to, a prior body: nevertheless, which is seen in plants most decisively, the incepted organization, though formed within, and through, and by, a preceding organization, is not corrupted by its corruption, or destroyed by its dissolution: but on the contrary, is sometimes extricated and developed by those very causes; survives and comes into action, when the purpose, for which it was prepared, requires its use. Now an economy which nature has adopted, when the purpose was to transfer an organization from one individual to another, may have something analogous to it, when the purpose is to transmit an organization from one state of being to another state: and they who found thought in organization, may see something in this analogy applicable to their difficulties; for whatever can transmit a similarity of organization will answer their purpose, because, according even to their own theory, it may be the vehicle of consciousness; and because consciousness carries identity and individuality along with it through all changes of form or of visible qualities. In the most general case, that, as we have said, of the derivation of plants and animals from one another, the latent organization is either itself similar to the old organization, or has the power of communicating to new matter the old organic form. But it is not restricted to this rule. There are other cases, especially in the progress of insect life, in which the dormant organization does not much resemble that which encloses it, and still less suits with the situation in which the enclosing body is placed, but suits with a different situation to which it is destined. In the larva of the libellula, which lives constantly, and has still long to live under water, are descried the wings of a fly which two years afterward is to mount into the air. Is there nothing in this analogy? It serves at least to show that even in the observable course of nature, organizations are formed one beneath another; and, amongst a thousand other instances, it shows completely, that the Deity can mould and fashion the parts of material nature, so as to fulfil any purpose whatever which he is pleased to appoint.

They who refer the operations of mind to a substance totally and essentially different from matter, (as most certainly these operations, though effected by material causes, hold very little affinity to any properties of matter with which we are acquainted,) adopt perhaps a juster reasoning and a better philosophy: and by these the considerations above suggested are not wanted, at least in the same degree. But to such as find, which some persons do find, an insuperable difficulty in shaking off an adherence to those analogies, which the corporeal world is continually suggesting to their thoughts; to such, I say, every consideration will be a relief, which manifests the extent of that intelligent power which is acting in nature, the fruitfulness of its resources, the variety, and aptness, and success of its means; most especially every consideration, which tends to show that, in the translation of a conscious existence, there is not, even in their own way of regarding it, any thing greatly beyond, or totally unlike, what takes place in such parts (probably small parts) of the order of nature, as are accessible to our observation.

Again; if there be those who think, that the contractedness and debility of the human faculties in our present state, seem ill to accord with the high destinies which the expectations of religion point out to us; I would only ask them, whether any one, who saw a child two hours after its birth, could suppose that it would ever come to understand *fluxions*;* or who then shall say, what farther amplification of intellectual powers, what accession of knowledge, what advance and improvement, the rational faculty, be its constitution what it will, may not admit of, when placed amidst new objects, and endowed with a sensorium adapted, as it undoubtedly will be, and as our present senses are, to the perception of those substances, and of those properties of things, with which our concern may lie.

Upon the whole; in every thing which respects this awful, but, as we trust, glorious change, we have a wise and powerful Being (the author, in nature, of infinitely various expedients for infinitely various ends,) upon whom to rely for the choice and appointment of means adequate to the execution of any plan which his goodness or his justice may have formed for the moral and accountable part of his terrestrial creation. That great office rests with *him;* be it *ours* to hope and to prepare, under a firm and settled persuasion, that, living and dying, we are his: that life is passed in his constant presence, that death resigns us to his merciful disposal.

* See Search's Light of Nature, *passim.*

A DEFENCE

OF THE

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PROPRIETY OF REQUIRING A SUBSCRIPTION TO ARTICLES OF FAITH.

IN REPLY TO A LATE ANSWER FROM THE CLARENDON PRESS.

THE fair way of conducting a dispute, is to exhibit one by one the arguments of your opponent, and with each argument the precise and specific answer you are able to give it. If this method be not so common, nor found so convenient, as might be expected, the reason is, because it suits not always with the designs of a writer, which are no more perhaps than to make a *book;* to confound some arguments, and to keep others out of sight; to leave what is called an impression upon the reader, without any care to inform him of the proofs or principles by which his opinion should be governed. With such views it may be consistent to despatch objections, by observing of some "that they are old," and therefore, like certain drugs, have lost, we may suppose, their strength; of others, that "they have long since received an answer;" which implies, to be sure, a confutation: to attack straggling remarks, and decline the main reasoning, as "mere declamation;" to pass by one passage because it is "long winded," another because the answerer "has neither leisure nor inclination to enter into the discussion of it;" to produce extracts and quotations, which, taken alone, imperfectly, if at all, express their author's meaning; to dismiss a stubborn difficulty with a "reference," which ten to one the reader never looks at; and, lastly, in order to give the whole a certain fashionable air of candour and moderation, to make a concession* or two which nobody thanks him for, or yield up a few points which it is no longer any credit to maintain.

How far the writer with whom we have to do is concerned in this description, his readers will judge: he shall receive, however, from us, that justice which he has not shown the author of the "Considerations," to have his arguments fully and distinctly stated and examined.

After complaining, as is usual on these occasions, of disappointment and dissatisfaction; the answerer sets out with an argument which comprises, we are told, in a "narrow compass," the whole merits of the question betwixt us; and which is neither more nor less than this, that "it is necessary that those who are to be ordained teachers in the church should be sound in the faith, and consequently that they should give to those who ordain them some proof and assurance that they are so, and that the method of this proof should be settled by public authority." Now the perfection of this sort of reasoning is, that it comes as well from the mouth of the pope's professor of divinity in the university of Bologna, as from the Clarendon press. A church has only, with our author, to call her creed the "faithful word," and it follows from Scripture that "we must hold it fast." Her dissatisfied sons, let her only denominate as he does,* "vain talkers and deceivers," and St. Paul himself commands us to "stop their mouths." Every one that questions or opposes her decisions she pronounces, with him, a heretic, and "a man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." In like manner, calling her tenets "sound doctrine," or taking it for granted that they are so, (which the conclave at Rome can do as well as the convocation at London,) and "soundness in the faith being a necessary qualification in a Christian teacher," there is no avoiding the conclusion, that every "Christian teacher" (in, and out of the church too, if you can catch him, "soundness in the faith" being alike "necessary" in all) must have these tenets strapped about his neck by oaths and subscriptions. An argument which thus fights in any cause, or on either side, deserves no quarter. I have said, that this reasoning, and these applications of Scripture, are equally competent to the defenders of popery —they are more so. The popes, when they assumed the power of the apostles, laid claim also to their infallibility; and in this they were consistent. Protestant churches renounce with all their might this infallibility, whilst they apply to themselves every expression that describes it, and will not part with a jot of the authority which is built upon it. But to return to the terms of the argument. "Is it necessary that a Christian teacher should be sound in the faith?"

1. Not in nine instances out of ten to which the test is now extended. Nor,

* Such as, that "if people keep their opinions to themselves, no man will hurt them," and the like.—Answer, p. 45.

* Page 18.

2. If it were, is this the way to make him so; there being as little probability that the determinations of a set of men whose good fortune had advanced them to high stations in the church should be right, as the conclusions of private inquirers. Nor,

3. Were they actually right, is it possible to conceive how they can, upon this author's principles, produce the effect contended for, since "we set them not up as a rule of faith;"* since "they do not decide matters for us, nor bind them upon us;" since "they tie no man up from altering his opinion," are "no ways inconsistent with the right of private judgment," are, in a word, of no more authority than an old sermon; nor, consequently, much more effectual, either for the producing or securing of "soundness in the faith."

The answerer, not trusting altogether to the strength of his "argument," endeavours next to avail himself of a "concession" which he has gained, he imagines, from his adversary, and which he is pleased to look upon "as in a manner giving up the main point." Our business, therefore, will be to show what this concession, as he calls it, amounts to, and wherein it differs from the "main point," the requisition of subscription to established formularies. It is objected to the Articles of the Church of England, that they are at variance with the actual opinions both of the governors and members of that church; so much so, that the men who most faithfully and explicitly maintain these articles, get persecuted for their singularity, excluded from orders, driven from universities, and are compelled to preach the established religion in fields and conventicles. Now this objection, which must cleave to every *fixed* formulary, might, we conceive, be removed if a test was substituted, supposing any test to be insisted upon, which could adapt itself to the opinions, and keep pace with the improvements, of each succeeding age. This, in some measure, would be the case, if the governors of the church for the time being, were authorized to receive from candidates for orders declarations of their religious principles in their own words, and allowed, at their discretion, to admit them into the ministry. Bishops being taken out of the lump of the community will generally be of the same leaven, and partake both of the opinions and moderation of the times they live in. This is the most that can be made of the concession; and how this gives up the "main point," or indeed any thing, it is not easy to discover.

The next paragraph of the Answer attacks the account which the Considerations have given of the "rise" and "progress" of the custom in question; "the reverse of which," the answerer tells us, "is the truth," and by way of proof gives his own account of the matter, which, so far from being the "reverse," is in effect, or very nearly, the same.

The reader shall see the two accounts side by side, and is desired to judge whether the author of the Considerations, so far from being confuted in this point, is even contradicted.

"The protestants, aware how greatly they were misrepresented and abused, began to think it necessary to repel the various calumnies that had been cast upon them, by setting forth some public Constitutions or Confessions, as a declaration of their faith and worship. And to make such declaration still more authentic, they likewise engaged themselves in a mutual bond of conformity to all these Constitutions."——Considerations, page 6.	"As some who set up for reformers had broached many erroneous and pestilent doctrines; the Lutherans, first, and, after their example, other protestant churches, thought fit to draw up Confessions of faith. And this they did partly to acquit themselves of the scandal of abetting wild and seditious enthusiasts, and declaring what were their real doctrines; partly" (observe how tenderly this is introduced) "to prevent such enthusiasts on the one hand, and popish emissaries on the other, from intruding themselves into the ministry.—Answer, pages 6, 7.

Now, were the "origin" of a custom of more consequence than it is to a question concerning the "propriety" of it, can any one doubt, who credits even the answerer's own account, but that the motive assigned in the considerations, both did exist, and was the principal motive? There is one account, indeed, of the "origin" of this custom, which, were it true, would directly concern the question. "This practice," our author tells us in another part of his Answer,* "is said to be derived from the apostles themselves." I care not what "is said." It is impossible that the practice complained of, the imposition of articles of faith by "fallible" men, could originate from the "apostles," who, under the direction by which they acted were infallible."†

But this practice, from whatever "root of bitterness" it sprung, has been one of the chief causes, we assert, of the divisions and distresses which we read of in ecclesiastical history. The matter of fact our author does not, because he cannot, deny. He rather chooses to insinuate that "such divisions and disturbances were not owing to the governors of the church, but to the perverse disputings of heretics and schismatics." He *must* know that there is oppression as well as resistance, provocation as well as resentment, abuse of power as well as opposition to it: and it is too much to take for granted, without one syllable of proof, that those in possession of power have been always in the right, and those who withstood them in the wrong. "Divisions" and "disturbances" have in fact, and in all ages, arisen on this account, and it is a poor shift to say, because it may always be said, that such only are chargeable with these mischiefs as refused to submit

* Pages 11. 13. 19. 29.

* Page 19.

† How a creed is to be made, as the Considerations recommend, in which all parties shall agree, our author cannot understand. I will tell him how; by adhering to Scripture terms: and this will suit the best idea of a Creed (a summary or compendium of a larger volume,) and the only fair purpose of one, *instruction*.

It is observed in the Considerations, that the multiplicity of the propositions contained in the thirty-nine Articles is alone sufficient to show the impossibility of that consent which the Church imposes and requires.—Now, what would any man guess is the answer to this? Why, "that there are no less than three propositions in the very first verse of St. John's Gospel." Had there been "three thousand" it would have been nothing to the purpose: where propositions are received upon the authority of the proposer, it matters not how many of them there are; the doubt is not increased with the number; the same reason which establishes one establishes all. But is this the case with a system of propositions which derives no evidence from the proposer? which must each stand upon its own separate and intrinsic proof?—We thought it necessary to oppose note to note in the place in which we found it; though neither here nor in the Answer is it much connected with the text.

to whatever their superiors thought proper to impose.*

Nor is it much better when he tells us, "that these subtleties of metaphysical debate, which we complain of in our Articles, were introduced by the several heretics of those times;" especially as it is evident that whoever first introduced, it is the governors of the church who still continue them.

But our author cannot conceive what all this, as relating to "creeds" only and "confessions," to the "terms of communion" rather than of admission into the ministry, is to the purpose. Will he then give up "creeds" and "confessions?" or will his church thank him for it if he does? a church which, by transfusing the substance of her Articles into the form of her public worship, has in effect made the "terms of communion" and of admission into the ministry the same. This question, like every other, however naked you may strip it by abstraction, must always be considered with a reference to the practice you wish to reform.

The author of the Considerations contends very properly, that it is one of the first duties a Christian owes to his Master, "to keep his mind open and unbiassed" in religious inquiries. Can a man be said to do this, who must bring himself to assent to opinions proposed by another? who enters into a profession where both his subsistence and success depend upon his continuance in a particular persuasion? In answer to this we are informed, that these Articles are no "rule of faith;" (what! not to those who subscribe them?) that "the church deprives no man of his right of private judgment;"(she cannot—she hangs, however, a dead weight upon it;) that it is a "very unfair state of the case, to call subscription a declaration of our full and final persuasion in matters of faith;" though if it be not a "full" persuasion, what is it? and ten to one it will be "final," when such consequences attend a change. That "no man is hereby tied up from impartially examining the word of God," *i. e.* with the "impartiality" of a man who must "eat" or "starve" according as the examination turns out; an "impartiality" so suspected, that a court of justice would not receive his evidence under half of the same influence: "nor from altering his opinion if he finds reason so to do, which few, I conceive, will "find," when the alteration must cost them so dear. If one could give credit to our author in what he says here, and in some other passages of his Answer, one would suppose that, in his judgment at least, subscription restrained no man from adopting what opinion he pleased, provided "he does not think himself bound openly to maintain it:" that "men may retain their preferments, if they will but keep their opinions to themselves." If this be what the church of England means, let her say so. This is indeed what our author admits here, and yet, from the outcry he has afterwards raised against all who continue in the church whilst they dissent from her Articles, one would not suppose there was a pardon left for those, who "keep even to themselves an opinion" inconsistent with any one proposition they have subscribed. The fact is, the gentleman has either shifted his opinion in the course of writing the Answer, or had put down these assertions, not expecting that he should have occasion afterwards to contradict them.

It seemed to add strength to this objection, that the judgment of most thinking men being in a progressive state, their opinions of course must many of them change; the evil and iniquity of which the answerer sets forth with great pleasantry, but has forgot at the same time to give us any remedy for the misfortune, except the old woman's receipt, to leave off thinking for fear of thinking wrong.

But our church "preaches," it seems, "no other Gospel than that which she received," nor propounds any other Articles for Gospel," nor "fixes any standards or criterions of faith, separate from this Gospel: and so she herself fully declares;"and we are to take her "word" for it, when the very complaint is, that she has never "acted" up to this declaration, but in direct contradiction to it. When she puts forth a system of propositions conceived in a new dialect, and in unscriptural terms; when she ascribes to these the same evidence and certainty as to Scripture itself, or decrees and acts as if they were equally evident and certain; she incurs, we apprehend, the charge which these expressions imply. She claims indeed "authority in controversies of faith," but "only so far," says her apologist, as "to judge for herself what should be her own terms of communion, and what qualifications, she shall require in her own ministers." All which, in plainer English, comes to this; that two or three men, betwixt two and three centuries ago, fixed a multitude of obscure and dubious propositions, which many millions after must bring themselves to believe, before they be permitted to share in the provision which the state has made (and to which all of every sect contribute) for regular opportunities of public worship, and the giving and receiving of public instruction. And this our author calls the magistrate's "judging for himself,"* and exercising the "same right as all other persons have to judge for themselves." For the reasonableness of it, however, he has nothing to offer, but that it "is no more than what other churches, popish" too, to strengthen the argument, "as well as protestant," have done before. He might have added, seeing "custom" is to determine the matter, that it had been "customary" too from early ages for Christians to anathematize and burn each other for difference of opinion in some points of faith, and for difference of practice in some points of ceremony.

We now accompany the learned answerer to what he is pleased to call the "main question," and which he is so much "puzzled to keep in sight." The argument† in favour of subscription and the arbitrary exclusion of men from the church or ministry, drawn from the nature of a society

* The following sentiment of our author is too curious to be omitted: "Possibly too he (the author of the Considerations) may think that insurrections and rebellions in the state are not owing to the unruliness of factious subjects, but to kings and rulers; but most reasonable men, I believe, will think otherwise."—A common reader may think this observation of the answerer a little beside the question.—But the answerer may say, with Cicero and Dr. King, "Suscepto negotio majus mihi quiddam proposui, in quo meam in Rempublicam voluntatem populus perspiceri posset."—Motto to Dr. K.'s Oration in 1749.

* Page 26.

† What would any man in his wits think of this argument, if upon the strength of it they were to make a law, that none but red-haired people should be admitted into orders, or even into churches.

and the rights incidental to society, our author resigns to its fate, and to the answer which has been given it in the Considerations. He contends only, that the conduct of the apostles in admitting the eunuch and the centurion upon a general profession of their faith in Christ, "has nothing to do with the case of subscription," as they were admitted, not into the ministry, but only the communion of the church. Now, in the first place, suppose the eunuch or centurion had taken upon them, as probably they did, to teach Christianity, would they have been inhibited by the apostles as not having given sufficient "proof or assurance of their soundness in the faith?" And if not, what becomes of the necessity of such "assurances from a Christian teacher?" In the second place, suppose you consider the church as one society, and its teachers as another, is it probable that those who were so tender in keeping any one out of the first, would have thought the argument we were encountering, or any thing else, a pretence for a right of arbitrary exclusion from the latter? The case of Cornelius, says our author, is "extraordinary; while St. Peter was preaching to him, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them which heard the word." And is not this author ashamed to own, that any are excluded from the communion, or even ministry of the church, who would have been entitled by their faith "to the gifts of the Holy Ghost?"

The answerer in the next paragraph acknowledges, that to admit converts into the church upon this one article of faith, that Jesus is the Messiah, was indeed the practice of the apostles;* but then he tells us, what must sound a little odd to a Christian ear, and comes the more awkwardly from this author, whom, if you turn over a page, you will find quoting the "practice of the apostles" with a vengeance; he tells us, I say, "that no argument can be drawn from the practice of the apostles."† Now, with regard to the "practice of the apostles," and the application of it to ourselves, the case seems to be this (the very reverse, observe, of our author's rule,) that we are always bound not "to go beyond" the precedent, though, for want of the same authority, we may not always "advance up to it." It surely at least becomes us to be cautious of "proceeding," where they, in the plenitude of their commission, thought proper "to stop."

It is alleged in the Considerations, that annexing emoluments to the profession of particular opinions, is a strong and dangerous inducement to prevarication; and the danger is the greater, as prevarication in one instance has a tendency to relax the most sacred obligations, and make way for perfidy in every other. But "this," it seems, "has nothing to do with the question."‡ Why, it is the very question, Whether the magistrate ought to confine the provision he makes for religion to those who assent, or declare their assent, to a particular system of controverted divinity: and this is one direct objection against it. But "must the magistrate then," exclaims our alarmed adversary, "establish no tithes, no rich benefices, no dignities, or bishopries?" As many as he pleases, only let him not convert them into snares and traps by idle and unnecessary conditions. "But must he admit all persons indiscriminately to these advantages?" The author of the Considerations has told him, that he may require conformity to the liturgy, rites, and offices he shall prescribe; he may trust his officers with a discretion as to the religious principles of candidates for orders, similar to what they now exercise with regard to their qualifications; he may censure extravagant preaching when it "appears;" precautions surely sufficient either to keep the "wildest sectaries" out of the church, or prevent their doing any mischief if they get in. The exclusion of papists is a separate consideration. The laws against popery, as far as they are justifiable, proceed upon principles with which the author of the Considerations has nothing to do. Where, from the particular circumstances of a country, attachments and dispositions hostile and dangerous to the state, are accidentally or otherwise connected with certain opinions in religion, it may be necessary to lay encumbrances and restraints upon the profession or propagation of such opinions. Where a great part of any sect or religious order of men are enemies to the constitution, and you have no way of distinguishing those who are not so, it is right perhaps to fence the whole order out of your civil and religious establishment: it is the right at least of self-defence, and of extreme necessity. But even this is not on account of the religious opinions themselves, but as they are probable marks, and the only marks you have, of designs and principles which it is necessary to disarm. I would observe, however, that in proportion as this connexion between the civil and religious principles of the papists is dissolved, in the same proportion ought the state to mitigate the hardships and relax the restraints to which they are made subject.

If we complain of severities, of pains and penalties, the answerer cannot discover "whom or what we mean:" and lest his reader should, by a figure extremely well known in the craft of controversy, he proposes a string of questions in the person of his adversary, to which he gives his own peremptory and definitive NO.* We will take a method, not altogether so compendious, but, we trust, somewhat more satisfactory. We will repeat the same questions, and let the church and state answer for themselves. First, then,

"Does our church or our government inflict any corporal punishment, or levy any fines or penalties on those who will not comply with the terms of her communion?"—"Be it enacted, that all and every person or persons that shall neglect or refuse to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the Church of England, and yet, after such neglect or refusal, shall execute any office or offices, civil or military, after the times be expired wherein he or they

* Although the question, whether to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, be not the only necessary article of faith, is a question in which we have no concern; our author, with the best inclination in the world, not being able to fix such an opinion upon us; yet I cannot help observing, that he has put two of the oddest constructions upon the terms of the propositions that ever entered into the fancy of man to conceive. One is, which you may be sure he intends for his adversaries, § "that it is necessary to believe Jesus to be a true prophet, yet not necessary to believe one doctrine that he has taught." The other, which he means for himself, is, that "by the Messiah we are to understand the only begotten Son of God, anointed, and sent by the Father to make propitiation for the sins of the whole world."

† Page 16. ‡ Pages 19, 20. § Page 16.

ought to have taken the same, shall, upon conviction thereof, besides the loss of the office, forfeit the sum of five hundred pounds:"* Stat. 25 Car. II. c. 2. Now, although starving be no "corporal punishment," nor the loss of all a man has, a "fine," or "penalty," yet depriving men of the common benefits of society, and rights even of lay subjects, because "they will not comply with the terms of Church communion," is a "severity" that might have deserved from our author some other apology besides the mere suppression of the fact.

2. "Doth it deny them the right or privilege of worshipping God in their own way?"—"Whoever shall take upon him to preach or teach in any meeting, assembly, or conventicle, and shall thereof be convicted, shall forfeit for the first offence twenty pounds, and for every other offence forty pounds:" Stat. 22 Car. II. c. 1.—"No person shall presume to consecrate or administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper before he be ordained priest, after the manner of the church of England, on pain of forfeiting one hundred pounds for every such offence:" Stat. 13 & 14 Car. II. c. 4. These laws are in full force against all who do not subscribe to the 39 Articles of the Church of England, except the 34th, 35th, and 36th, and part of the 20th Article.

3. "Are men denied the liberty of free debate?"—"If any person, having been educated in, or at any time, having made profession of, the Christian faith within the realm, shall by writing, printing, teaching, or advised speaking, deny any one of the persons of the Holy Trinity to be God—he shall for the first offence be disabled to hold any office or employment, or any profit appertaining thereto; for the second offence shall be disabled to prosecute any action or information in any court of law or equity, or to be guardian of any child, or executor or administrator of any person, or capable of any legacy or deed of gift, or to bear any office for ever within this realm, and shall also suffer imprisonment for the space of three years from the time of such conviction." Stat. 9 & 10 Will. III. c. 32.

It has been thought to detract considerably from the pretended use of these subscriptions, that they excluded none but the conscientious; a species of men more wanted, we conceive, than formidable to any religious establishment. This objection applies equally, says our answerer,† to the "oaths of allegiance and supremacy;" and so far as it does apply, it ought to be attended to; and the truth is, these oaths might in many instances be spared without either danger or detriment to the community. There is, however, an essential difference between the two cases: a scruple concerning the oath of allegiance implies principles which may excite to acts of hostility against the state: a scruple about the truth of the articles implies no such thing.‡

Our author, good man, "is well persuaded, that the generality of the clergy, when they offer themselves for ordination, consider seriously what office they take upon them, and firmly believe what they subscribe to." I am persuaded much otherwise. But as this is a "fact," the reader, if he be wise, will neither take the answerer's word for it nor mine; but form his own judgment from his own observation. Bishop Burnet complained above 60 years ago, that "the greater part," even then, "subscribed the Articles without ever examining them,* and others did it because they must do it." Is it probable, that in point either of seriousness or orthodoxy, the clergy are much mended since?

The pleas offered in support of this practice of subscription come next to be considered. "One of these is drawn from the sacred writings being capable of such a variety of senses, that men of widely different persuasions shelter themselves under the same forms of expression." Our author, after quarrelling with this representation of the plea, gives his readers in its stead, a long quotation from the archdeacon of Oxford's charge.† What he is to gain by the change, or the quotation, I cannot perceive, as the same first query still recurs, "Is it true, that the Scriptures are in reality so differently interpreted in points of real consequence?" In answer to which, the archdeacon of Oxford, we are told, "has shown that points of real consequence are differently interpreted," and "the plainest texts explained away," and has "instanced in the first chapter of St. John's Gospel." The plea, we conceive, is not much indebted to the archdeacon of Oxford. But be these Scriptures interpreted as they will, each man has still a right to interpret them for himself. The Church of Rome, who always pushed her conclusions with a courage and consistency unknown to the timid patrons of protestant imposition, saw, immediately, that as the laity had no right to interpret the Scriptures, they could have no occasion to read them, and therefore very properly locked them up from the intrusion of popular curiosity. Our author cites the above-mentioned query from the Considerations as the *first* query, which would lead his reader to expect a *second*. The reader, however, may seek that second for himself, the answerer is not obliged to produce it—it stands thus: Suppose the Scriptures thus variously interpreted, does subscription mend the matter? The reader too is left to find an answer for himself.

The next, the strongest, the only tolerable plea for subscription, is, "that all sorts of pestilent heresies might be taught from the pulpit, if no such restraint as this was laid upon the preacher."‡ How far it is probable that this would be the consequence of removing the subscription, and by what other means it might be guarded against, has been hinted already, and will again be considered in another place. We will here only take notice of one particular expedient suggested in the Considerations, and which has often indeed elsewhere been proposed, namely, "that the church, instead of requiring subscription beforehand, to the present, or to any other Articles of faith, might censure her clergy afterwards, if they opposed or vilified them in their preaching."

* This and the Corporation Act, an otherwise excellent person calls the laws which secure both our civil and religious liberties.—Blackstone's Comm. vol. iv. p. 432.

† Page 22.

‡ The answerer might have found a parallel below in some other oaths, which he does not care to speak of, *viz.* the case of college statutes, page 34 of the Considerations.

* Burnet's History of his Own Times. Conclusion.

† See this whole Charge answered in the London Chronicle by Priscilla. The Lord hath sold Sisera into the hand of a woman!

‡ Page 26.

The advantage of which scheme above the present is manifest, if it was only for this reason, that you distress and corrupt thousands now, for one that you would ever have occasion to punish. Our author, nevertheless, "is humbly of opinion, that it is much better to take proper precautions beforehand;" he must, with all his "humility," know that when it has been proposed to take proper precautions of the press, by subjecting authors to an *imprimatur before* publication, instead of punishment *after* it; the proposal has been resented, as an open attack upon the rights and interests of mankind. The common sense and spirit of the nation could see and feel this distinction and the importance of it, in the case of publishers; and why preachers should be left in a worse situation, it is not very easy to say.

The example of the Arminian confession is, upon this occasion, recommended by the author of the Considerations; a confession which was compiled for the edification and instruction of the members of that church, without peremptorily insisting upon any one's assent to it. But it is the misfortune of the Arminian to be no national church—the misfortune, alas! of Christianity herself in her purest period; when she was under the government of the apostles; without alliance with the states of this world; when she composed, nevertheless, a church as real, we conceive, and as respectable, as any national church that has existed since.

Our author, who can much sooner make a distinction than see one, does not comprehend, it seems, any difference between confessions of faith and preaching, as to the use of unscriptural terms. Did a preacher, when he had finished his sermon, call upon his congregation to subscribe their names and assent to it, or never to come more within the doors of his church; there would, indeed, be some sort of resemblance betwixt the two cases; but as the hearers are at liberty to believe preachers or no, as they see, or he produces, reasons for what he says; there can be no harm, and there is a manifest utility, in trusting him with the liberty of explaining his own meaning in his own terms.

We now come, and with the tenderest regret, to the case of those who continue in the church without being able to reconcile to their belief every proposition imposed upon them by subscription; over whose distress our author is pleased to indulge a wanton and ungenerous triumph. They had presumed, it seems, that it was some apology for their conduct, that they sincerely laboured to render to religion their best services, and thought their present stations the fairest opportunities of performing it. This may not, perhaps, amount to a complete vindication; it certainly does not fully satisfy even their own scruples: else where would be the cause of complaint? What need of relief, or what reason for their petitions? It might have been enough, however, to have exempted them from being absurdly and indecently compared with faithless hypocrites, with Papists and Jesuits, who, for other purposes, and with even opposite designs, are supposed to creep into the church through the same door. For the fullest and fairest representation of their case, I refer our author to the excellent Hoadly; or, as Hoadly possibly may be no book in our author's library, will it provoke his "raillery" to ask, what he thinks might be the consequence, if all were at once to withdraw themselves from the church who were dissatisfied with her doctrines? Might not the church lose, what she can ill spare, the service of many able and industrious ministers? Would those she retained, be such as acquiesced in her decisions from inquiry and conviction? Would not many, or most of them, be those who keep out of the way of religious scruples by lives of secularity and voluptuousness? by mixing with the crowd in the most eager of their pursuits after pleasure or advantage? One word with the answerer before we part upon this head. Whence all this great inquisitiveness, this solicitude to be acquainted with the person, the opinions, and associates of his adversary? Whence that impertinent wish that he had been "more explicit in particular with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity?" Is it out of a pious desire to fasten some heresy, or the imputation of it, upon him? Is he "called out of the clouds" to be committed to the flames?*

The 40th page of the Answer introduces a paragraph of considerable length, the sum, however, and substance of which is this—that if subscription to articles of faith were removed, confusion would ensue; the people would be distracted with the disputes of their teachers, and the pulpits filled with controversy and contradiction. Upon this "fact" we join issue, and the more readily as this is a sort of reasoning we all understand. The extent of the legislator's right may be an abstruse inquiry; but whether a law does more good or harm, is a plain question which every man can ask. Now, that distressing many of the clergy, and corrupting others; that keeping out of churches good Christians and faithful citizens; that making parties in the state, by giving occasion to sects and separations in religion; that these are inconveniences, no man in his senses will deny. The question therefore is, what advantage do you find in the opposite scale to balance these inconveniences? The simple advantage pretended is, that you hereby prevent "wrangling" and contention in the pulpit. Now, in the first place, I observe, that allowing this evil to be as grievous and as certain as you please, the most that can be necessary for the prevention of it is, to enjoin your preachers as to such points, silence and neutrality. In the next place, I am convinced, that the danger is greatly magnified. We hear little of these points at present in our churches and public teaching, and it is not probable that leaving them at large would elevate them into more importance, or make it more worth men's while to quarrel about them. They would sleep in the same grave with many other questions, of equal importance with themselves, or sink back into their proper place, into topics of speculation, or matters of debate from the press. None but men of some reflection would be forward to engage in such subjects, and the least reflection would teach a man

* We were unwilling to decline the defence of the persons here described, though the expression in the Considerations which brought on the attack, manifestly related to a different subject. The author of the Considerations speaks of "being bound" to "keep up" these forms until relieved by proper authority; of "ministerially" complying with what we are not able to remove; alluding, no doubt, to the case of Church governors, who are the instruments of imposing a subscription which they may disapprove. But the answerer, taking it for granted, that "ministerially complying" meant the compliance of ministers, *i. e.* of clergymen officiating in their functions, has, by a quibble, or a blunder, transferred the passage to a sense for which it was not intended.

that preaching is not the proper vehicle of controversy. Even at present, says our author, "we speak and write what we please with impunity." And where is the mischief? or what worse could ensue if subscription were removed? Nor can I discover any thing in the disposition of the petitioning clergy that need alarm our apprehensions. If they are impatient under the yoke, it is not from a desire to hold forth their opinions to their congregations, but that they may be at liberty to entertain themselves, without offence to their consciences, or ruin to their fortunes.

Our author has added, by way of make-weight to his argument, "that many common Christians," he believes, "would be greatly scandalized if you take away their creeds and catechisms, and strike out of the liturgy such things as they have always esteemed essential."* Whatever reason there may be for this belief at present, there certainly was much greater at the Reformation, as the Popish ritual, which was then "taken away," had a fascination and antiquity which ours cannot pretend to. Many were probably "scandalized" at parting with their beads and their mass-books, that lived afterwards to thank those who taught them better things. Reflection, we hope, in some, and time, we are sure, in all, will reconcile men to alterations established in reason. If there be any danger, it is from some of the clergy, who, with the answerer, would rather suffer the "vineyard" to be overgrown with "weeds," than "stir the ground," or, what is worse, call these weeds "the fairest flowers in the garden." Such might be ready enough to raise a hue and cry against all innovators in religion, as "overturners of churches" and spoilers of temples.

But the cause which of all others stood most in the way of the late petitions for relief, was an apprehension that religious institutions cannot be disturbed without awakening animosities and dissensions in the state, of which no man knows the consequence. Touch but religion, we are told, and it bursts forth into a flame. Civil distractions may be composed by fortitude and perseverance; but neither reason nor authority can controul, there is neither charm nor drug which will assuage, the passions of mankind when called forth in the cause and to the battles of religion. We were concerned to hear this language from some who, in other instances, have manifested a constancy and resolution which no confusion nor ill aspect of public affairs, could intimidate. After all, is there any real foundation for these terrors? Is not this whole danger, like the lion of the slothful, the creature of our fears, and the excuse of indolence? Was it proposed to make articles instead of removing them, there would be room for the objection. But it is obvious that subscription to the 39 Articles might be altered or withdrawn upon general principles of justice and expediency, without reviving one religious controversy, or calling into dispute a single proposition they contain. Who should excite disturbances? Those who are relieved will not; and, unless subscription were like a tax, which, being taken from one must be laid with additional weight upon another, is it probable that any will complain that they are oppressed, because their brethren are relieved? or that those who are so "strong in the faith" will refuse to "bear with the infirmities of the weak?" The few who upon principles of this sort opposed the application of the Dissenters, were repulsed from parliament with disdain, even by those who were no friends to the application itself.

The question concerning the object of worship is attended, I confess, with difficulty; it seems almost directly to divide the worshippers. But let the Church pare down her excrescences till she comes to this question; let her discharge from her liturgy controversies unconnected with devotion; let her try what may be done for all sides, by worshipping God in that generality* of expression in which he himself has left some points; let her dismiss many of her Articles, and convert those which she retains into terms of peace; let her recall the terrors she suspended over freedom of inquiry; let the toleration she allows to dissenters be made "absolute;" let her invite men to search the Scriptures; let her governors encourage the studious and learned of all persuasions:—Let her do this—and she will be secure of the thanks of her own clergy, and what is more, of their sincerity. A greater consent may grow out of inquiry than many at present are aware of; and the few, who, after all shall think it necessary to recede from our communion, will acknowledge the necessity to be inevitable; will respect the equity and moderation of the established church, and live in peace with all its members.

I know not whether I ought to mention, among so many more serious reasons, that even the governors of the church themselves would find their ease and account in consenting to an alteration.—For besides the difficulty of defending those decayed fortifications, and the indecency of deserting them, they either are or will soon find themselves in the situation of a master of a family, whose servants know more of his secrets than it is proper for them to know, and whose whispers and whose threats must be bought off at an expense which will drain the "apostolic chamber" dry.

Having thus examined in their order, and, as far as I understood them, the several answers†

* Pages 41, 42

* If a Christian can think it an intolerable thing to worship one God through one mediator Jesus Christ, in company with any such as differ from him in their notions about the metaphysical nature of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, or the like; I am sorry for it. I remember the like objection made at the beginning of the Reformation by the Lutherans against the lawfulness of communicating with Zuinglius and his followers, because they had not the same notion with them of the elements in the sacrament. And there was the same objection once against holding communion with any such as had not the same notions with themselves about the secret decrees of God relating to the predestination and reprobation of particular persons. But whatever those men may please themselves with thinking who are sure they are arrived at the perfect knowledge of the most abstruse points, this they may be certain of, that in the present state of the church, even supposing only such as are accounted orthodox to be joined together in one visible communion, they communicate together with a very great variety and confusion of notions, either comprehending nothing plain and distinct, or differing from one another as truly and as essentially as others differ from them all; nay, with more certain difference with relation to the object of worship than if all prayers were directed (as bishop Bull says, almost all were in the first ages) to God or the Father, through the Son.—Hoadly's Answer to Dr. Hare's Sermon.

† In his last note our author breaks forth into "astonishment" and indignation, at the "folly, injustice,

given by our author to the objections against the present mode of subscription, it now remains, by way of summing up the evidence, to bring "forward" certain other arguments contained in the Considerations, to which no answer has been attempted. It is contended, then,

I. That stating any doctrine in a confession of faith with a greater degree of "precision" than the Scriptures have done, is in effect to say, that the Scriptures have not stated it "with "precision" enough; in other words, that the Scriptures are not sufficient.—"Mere declamation."

II. That this experiment of leaving men at liberty, and points of doctrine at large, has been attended with the improvements of religious knowledge, where and whenever it has been tried. And to this cause, so far as we can see, is owing the advantage which protestant countries in this respect possess above their popish neighbours.—No answer.

III. That keeping people out of churches who might be admitted consistently with every end of public worship, and excluding men from communion who desire to embrace it upon the terms that God prescribes, is certainly not encouraging, but rather causing men to forsake, the assembling of themselves together.—No answer.

IV. That men are deterred from searching the Scriptures by the fear of finding there more or less than they look for; that is, something inconsistent with what they have already given their assent to, and must at their peril abide by. —No answer.

V. That it is not giving truth a fair chance, to decide points at one certain time, and by one set of men, which had much better be left to the successive inquiries of different ages and different persons.—No answer.

VI. That it tends to multiply infidels amongst us, by exhibiting Christianity under a form and in a system which many are disgusted with, who yet will not be at the pains to inquire after any other.—No answer.

At the conclusion of his pamphlet, our author is pleased to acknowledge, what few, I find, care any longer to deny, "that there are some things in our Articles and Liturgy which he should be glad to see amended, many which he should be willing to give up to the scruples of others," but that the heat and violence with which redress has been pursued, preclude all hope of accommodation and tranquillity—that "we had better wait, therefore, for more peaceable times, and be contented with our present constitution as it is," until a fairer prospect shall appear of changing it for the better. —After returning thanks, in the name of the "fraternity," to him and to all who touch the burden of subscription with but one of their fingers, I would wish to leave with them this observation, —That as the man who attacks a flourishing establishment writes with a halter round his neck, few ever will be found to attempt alterations but men of more spirit than prudence, of more sincerity than caution, of warm, eager, and impetuous tempers; that, consequently, if we are to wait for improvement till the cool, the calm, the discreet part of mankind begin it, till church governors solicit, or ministers of state propose it—I will venture to pronounce, that (without *His* interposition with whom nothing is impossible) we may remain as we are till the "renovation of all things."

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and indecency" of comparing our church to the Jewish in our Saviour's time, and even to the "tower of Babel;" mistaking the church, in this last comparison, for one of her monuments (which indeed, with most people of his complexion, stands for the same thing) erected to prevent our dispersion from that grand centre of catholic dominion, or, in the words of a late celebrated castle-builder, "to keep us together." If there be any "indecency" in such a comparison, it must be chargeable on those who lead us to it, by making use of the same terms with the original architects, and to which the author of the Considerations evidently alludes. This detached note is concluded with as detached, and no less curious, an observation, which the writer thinks may be a "sufficient answer" to the whole, namely, that the author of the Considerations "has wrought no miracles for the conviction of the answerer and his associates." For what purpose this observation can be "sufficient," it is not easy to guess, except it be designed to insinuate, what may perhaps really be the case, that no less than a miracle will serve to cast out that kind of spirit which has taken so full possession of them, or ever bring them to a sound mind, and a sincere love of truth.

REASONS FOR CONTENTMENT,

ADDRESSED TO THE

LABOURING PART OF THE BRITISH COMMUNITY.

HUMAN life has been said to resemble the situation of spectators in a theatre, where, whilst each person is engaged by the scene which passes before him, no one thinks about the place in which he is seated. It is only when the business is interrupted, or when the spectator's attention to it grows idle and remiss, that he begins to consider at all, who is before him or who is behind him, whether others are better accommodated than himself, or whether many be not much worse. It is thus with the various ranks and stations of society. So long as a man is intent upon the duties and concerns of his own condition, he never thinks of comparing it with any other; he is never troubled with reflections upon the different classes and orders of mankind, the advantages and disadvantages of each, the necessity or non-necessity of civil distinctions, much less does he feel within himself a disposition to covet or envy any of them. He is too much taken up with the occupations of his calling, its pursuits, cares, and business, to bestow unprofitable meditations upon the circumstances in which he sees others placed. And by this means a man of a sound and active mind has, in his very constitution, a remedy against the disturbance of envy and discontent. These passions gain no admittance into his breast, because there is no leisure there or vacancy for the trains of thought which generate them. He enjoys, therefore, ease in this respect, and ease resulting from the best cause, the power of keeping his imagination at home; of confining it to what belongs to himself, instead of sending it forth to wander amongst speculations which have neither limits nor use, amidst views of unattainable grandeur, fancied happiness, of extolled, because unexperienced, privileges and delights.

The wisest advice that can be given is, never to allow our attention to dwell upon comparisons between our own condition and that of others, but to keep it fixed upon the duties and concerns of the condition itself. But since every man has not this power; since the minds of some men will be busy in contemplating the advantages which they see others possess; and since persons in laborious stations of life are wont to view the higher ranks of society, with sentiments which not only tend to make themselves unhappy, but which are very different from the truth; it may be an useful office to point out to them some of those considerations which, if they *will* turn their thoughts to the subject, they should endeavour to take fairly into the account.

And, first; we are most of us apt to murmur, when we see exorbitant fortunes placed in the hands of single persons; larger, we are sure, than they can want, or, as we think, than they can use. This is so common a reflection, that I will not say it is not natural. But whenever the complaint comes into our minds, we ought to recollect, that the thing happens in consequence of those very rules and laws which secure to ourselves our property, be it ever so small. The laws which accidentally cast enormous estates into one great man's possession, are, after all, the self-same laws which protect and guard the poor man. Fixed rules of property are established for one as well an another, without knowing, before-hand, whom they may effect. If these rules sometimes throw an excessive or disproportionate share to one man's lot, who can help it? It is much better that it should be so, than that the rules themselves should be broken up; and you can only have one side of the alternative or the other. To abolish riches, would not be to abolish poverty; but, on the contrary, to leave it without protection or resource. It is not for the poor man to repine at the effects of laws and rules, by which he himself is benefited every hour of his existence; which secures to him his earnings, his habitation, his bread, his life; without which he, no more than the rich man, could either eat his meal in quietness, or go to bed in safety. Of the two, it is rather more the concern of the poor to stand up for the laws, than of the rich; for it is the law which defends the weak against the strong, the humble against the powerful, the little against the great; and weak and strong, humble and powerful, little and great, there would be, even were there no laws whatever. Beside, what, after all, is the mischief? The owner of a great estate does not eat or drink more than the owner of a small one. His fields do not produce worse crops, nor does the produce maintain fewer mouths. If estates were more equally divided, would greater numbers be fed, or clothed, or employed? Either, therefore, large fortunes are not a public evil, or, if they be in any degree an evil, it is to be borne with, for the sake of those fixed and general rules concerning property, in the preservation and steadiness of which all are interested.

Fortunes, however, of any kind, from the nature of the thing, can only fall to the lot of a few. I say, "from the nature of the thing." The very utmost that can be done by laws and government, is to enable every man, who hath health, to procure a healthy subsistence for himself and a family. Where this is the case, things are at their perfec-

tion. They have reached their limit. Were the princes and nobility, the legislators and counsellors of the land, all of them the best and wisest men that ever lived, their united virtue and wisdom could do no more than this. They, if any such there be, who would teach you to expect more, give you no instance where more has ever been attained. .

But Providence, which foresaw, which appointed, indeed, the necessity to which human affairs are subjected, (and against which it were impious to complain,) hath contrived, that, whilst fortunes are only for a few, the rest of mankind may be happy without them. And this leads me to consider the comparative advantages and comforts which belong to the condition of those who subsist, as the great mass of every people do and must subsist, by personal labour, and the solid reasons they have for contentment in their stations. I do not now use the terms poor and rich: because that man is to be accounted poor, of whatever rank he be, and suffers the pains of poverty, whose expenses exceed his resources; and no man is, properly speaking, poor but he. But I, at present, consider the advantages of those laborious conditions of life which compose the great portion of every human community.

And, first; it is an inestimable blessing of such situations, that they supply a constant train of employment both to body and mind. A husbandman, or a manufacturer, or a tradesman, never goes to bed at night without having his business to rise up to in the morning. He would understand the value of this advantage, did he know that the want of it composes one of the greatest plagues of the human soul; a plague by which the rich, especially those who inherit riches, are exceedingly oppressed. Indeed it is to get rid of it, that is to say, it is to have something to do, that they are driven upon those strange and unaccountable ways of passing their time, in which we sometimes see them, to our surprise, engaged. A poor man's condition supplies him with that which no man can do without, and with which a rich man, with all his opportunities, and all his contrivance, can hardly supply himself; regular engagement, business to look forward to, something to be done for every day, some employment prepared for every morning. A few of better judgment can seek out for themselves constant and useful occupation. There is not one of you takes the pains in his calling, which some of the most independent men in the nation have taken, and are taking, to promote what they deem to be a point of great concern to the interests of humanity, by which neither they nor theirs can ever gain a shilling, and in which should they succeed, those who are to be benefited by their service, will neither know nor thank them for it. I only mention this to show, in conjunction with what has been observed above, that, of those who are at liberty to act as they please, the wise prove, and the foolish confess, by their conduct, that a life of employment is the only life worth leading; and that the chief difference between their manner of passing their time and yours, is, that they can choose the objects of their activity, which you cannot. This privilege may be an advantage to some, but for nine out of ten it is fortunate that occupation is provided to their hands, that they have it not to seek, that it is imposed upon them by their necessities and occasions; for the consequence of liberty in this respect would be, that, lost in the perplexity of choosing, they would sink into irrecoverable indolence, inaction, and unconcern; into that vacancy and tiresomeness of time and thought which are inseparable from such a situation. A man's thoughts must be going. Whilst he is awake, the working of his mind is as constant as the beating of his pulse. He can no more stop the one than the other. Hence if our thoughts have nothing to act upon, they act upon ourselves. They acquire a corrosive quality. They become in the last degree irksome and tormenting. Wherefore that sort of equitable engagement, which takes up the thoughts sufficiently, yet so as to leave them capable of turning to any thing more important, as occasions offer or require, is a most invaluable blessing. And if the industrious be not sensible of the blessing, it is for no other reason than because they have never experienced, or rather suffered the want of it.

Again; some of the necessities which poverty (if the condition of the labouring part of mankind must be so called) imposes, are not hardships but pleasures. Frugality itself is a pleasure. It is an exercise of attention and contrivance, which, whenever it is successful, produces satisfaction. The very care and forecast that are necessary to keep expenses and earnings upon a level, form, when not embarrassed by too great difficulties, an agreeable engagement of the thoughts. This is lost amidst abundance. There is no pleasure in taking out of a large unmeasured fund. They who do that, and only that, are the mere conveyers of money from one hand to another.

A yet more serious advantage which persons in inferior stations possess, is the ease with which they provide for their children. All the provision which a poor man's child requires, is contained in two words, "industry and innocence." With these qualities, though without a shilling to set him forwards, he goes into the world prepared to become an useful, virtuous, and happy man. Nor will he fail to meet with a maintenance adequate to the habits with which he has been brought up, and to the expectations which he has formed; a degree of success sufficient for a person of any condition whatever. These qualities of industry and innocence, which, I repeat again, are all that are absolutely necessary, every parent can give to his children without expense, because he can give them by his own authority and example; and they are to be communicated, I believe, and preserved, in no other way. I call this a serious advantage of humble stations; because in what we reckon superior ranks of life, there is a real difficulty in placing children in situations which may in any degree support them in the class and in the habits in which they have been brought up by their parents: from which great and oftentimes distressing perplexity the poor are free. With health of body, innocence of mind, and habits of industry, a poor man's child has nothing to be afraid of, nor his father or mother any thing to be afraid of for him.

The labour of the world is carried on by *service*, that is, by one man working under another man's direction. I take it for granted that this is the best way of conducting business, because all nations and ages have adopted it. Consequently service is the relation which, of all others, affects the greatest numbers of individuals, and in the most sensible manner. In whatever country,

therefore, this relation is well and equitably regulated, in that country the poor will be happy. Now how is the matter managed with us? Except apprenticeships, the necessity of which every one, at least every father and mother, will acknowledge, as the best, if not the only practicable, way of gaining instruction and skill, and which have their foundation in *nature*, because they have their foundation in the *natural* ignorance and imbecility of youth; except these, service in England, is, as it ought to be, voluntary and by contract; a fair exchange of work for wages; an equal bargain, in which each party has his rights and his redress; wherein every servant chooses his master. Can this be mended? I will add, that a continuance of this connexion is frequently the foundation of so much mutual kindness and attachment, that very few friendships are more cordial, or more sincere; that it leaves oftentimes nothing in servitude except the name; nor any distinction but what one party is as much pleased with, and sometimes also as proud of, as the other.

What then (for this is the fair way of calculating) is there in higher stations to place against these advantages? What does the poor man see in the life or condition of the rich, that should render him dissatisfied with his own?

Was there as much in sensual pleasures, I mean in the luxuries of eating and drinking, and other gratifications of that sort, as some men's imaginations would represent them to be, but which no man's experience finds in them, I contend, that even in these respects, the advantage is on the side of the poor. The rich, who addict themselves to indulgence, lose their relish. Their desires are dead. Their sensibilities are worn and tired. Hence they lead a languid satiated existence. Hardly any thing can amuse, or rouse, or gratify them. Whereas the poor man, if something extraordinary fall in his way, comes to the repast with appetite; is pleased and refreshed; derives from his usual course of moderation and temperance a quickness of perception and delight which the unrestrained voluptuary knows nothing of. Habits of all kinds are much the same. Whatever is habitual, becomes smooth and indifferent, and nothing more. The luxurious receive no greater pleasures from their dainties, than the peasant does from his homely fare.—But here is the difference: The peasant whenever he goes abroad, finds a feast, whereas the epicure must be sumptuously entertained to escape disgust. They who spend every day in diversions, and they who go every day about their usual business, pass their time much alike. Attending to what they are about, wanting nothing, regretting nothing, they are both, whilst engaged, in a state of ease; but then, whatever suspends the pursuits of the man of diversion, distresses him, whereas to the labourer, or the man of business, every pause is a recreation. And this is a vast advantage which they possess who are trained and inured to a life of occupation, above the man who sets up for a life of pleasure. Variety is soon exhausted. Novelty itself is no longer new. Amusements are become too familar to delight, and he is in a situation in which he can never change but for the worse.

Another article which the poor are apt to envy in the rich, is their *ease*. Now here they mistake the matter totally. They call inaction ease, whereas nothing is farther from it. Rest is ease. That is true; but no man can rest who has not worked. Rest is the cessation of labour. It cannot therefore be enjoyed, or even tasted, except by those who have known fatigue. The rich see, and not without envy, the refreshment and pleasure which rest affords to the poor, and choose to wonder that they cannot find the same enjoyment in being free from the necessity of working at all. They do not observe that this enjoyment must be purchased by previous labour, and that he who will not pay the price cannot have the gratification. Being without work is one thing; reposing from work is another. The one is as tiresome and insipid as the other is sweet and soothing. The one, in general, is the fate of the rich man, the other is the fortune of the poor. I have heard it said, that if the face of happiness can any where be seen, it is in the summer evening of a country village; where, after the labours of the day, each man at his door, with his children, amongst his neighbours, feels his frame and his heart at rest, every thing about him pleased and pleasing, and a delight and complacency in his sensations far beyond what either luxury or diversion can afford. The rich want this; and they want what they must never have.

As to some other things which the poor are disposed to envy in the condition of the rich, such as their state, their appearance, the grandeur of their houses, dress, equipage, and attendance, they only envy the rich these things because they do not know the rich. They have not opportunities of observing with what neglect and insensibility the rich possess and regard these things themselves. If they could see the great man in his retirement, and in his actual manner of life, they would find him, if pleased at all, taking pleasure in some of those simple enjoyments which they can command as well as he. They would find him amongst his children, in his husbandry, in his garden, pursuing some rural diversion, or occupied with some trifling exercise, which are all gratifications, as much within the power and reach of the poor man as of the rich; or rather more so.

To learn the art of contentment, is only to learn what happiness actually consists in. Sensual pleasures add little to its substance. Ease, if by that be meant exemption from labour, contributes nothing. One, however, constant spring of satisfaction, and almost infallible support of cheerfulness and spirits, is the exercise of domestic affections; the presence of objects of tenderness and endearment in our families, our kindred, our friends. Now, have the poor any thing to complain of here? Are they not surrounded by their relatives as generally as others? The poor man has his wife and children about him; and what has the rich more? He has the same enjoyment of their society, the same solicitude for their welfare, the same pleasure in their good qualities, improvement, and success: their connexion with him, is as strict and intimate, their attachment as strong, their gratitude as warm. I have no propensity to envy any one, least of all the rich and great; but if I were disposed to this weakness, the subject of my envy would be, a healthy young man, in full possession of his strength and faculties, going forth in a morning to work for his wife and children, or bringing them home his wages at night.

But was difference of rank or fortune of more importance to personal happiness than it is, it would be ill purchased by any sudden or violent

change of condition. An alteration of circumstances, which breaks up a man's habits of life, deprives him of his occupation, removes him from his acquaintance, may be called an elevation of fortune, but hardly ever brings with it an addition of enjoyment. They to whom accidents of this sort have happened, never found them to answer their expectations. After the first hurry of the change is over, they are surprised to feel in themselves listlessness and dejection, a consciousness of solitude, vacancy, and restraint, in the place of cheerfulness, liberty, and ease. They try to make up for what they have lost, sometimes by a beastly sottishness, sometimes by a foolish dissipation, sometimes by a stupid sloth; all which effects are only so many confessions that changes of this sort were not made for man. If any public disturbance should produce, not an equality (for that is not the proper name to give it,) but a jumble of ranks and professions amongst us, it is not only evident what the rich would lose, but there is also this further misfortune, that what the rich lost the poor would not gain. I (God knows) could not get my livelihood by labour, nor would the labourer find any solace or enjoyment in my studies. If we were to exchange conditions to-morrow, all the effect would be, that we both should be more miserable, and the work of both be worse done. Without debating, therefore, what might be very difficult to decide, which of our two conditions was better to begin with, one point is certain, that it is best for each to remain in his own. The change, and the only change, to be desired, is that gradual and progressive improvement of our circumstances which is the natural fruit of successful industry; when each year is something better than the last; when we are enabled to add to our little household one article after another of new comfort or conveniency, as our profits increase, or our burden becomes less; and, what is best of all, when we can afford, as our strength declines, to relax our labours, or divide our cares. This may be looked forward to, and is practicable, by great numbers in a state of public order and quiet; it is absolutely impossible in any other.

If, in comparing the different conditions of social life, we bring religion into the account, the argument is still easier. Religion smooths all inequalities, because it unfolds a prospect which makes all earthly distinctions nothing. And I do allow that there are many cases of sickness, affliction, and distress, which Christianity alone can comfort. But in estimating the mere diversities of station and civil condition, I have not thought it necessary to introduce religion into the inquiry at all; because I contend, that the man who murmurs and repines, when he has nothing to murmur and repine about, but the mere want of independent property, is not only irreligious, but unreasonable, in his complaint; and that he would find, did he know the truth, and consider his case fairly, that a life of labour, such, I mean, as is led by the labouring part of mankind in this country, has advantages in it which compensate all its inconveniences. When compared with the life of the rich, it is better in these important respects: It supplies employment, it promotes activity. It keeps the body in better health, the mind more engaged, and, of course, more quiet. It is more sensible of ease, more susceptible of pleasure. It is attended with greater alacrity of spirits, a more constant cheerfulness and serenity of temper. It affords easier and more certain methods of sending children into the world in situations suited to their habits and expectations. It is free from many heavy anxieties which rich men feel; it is fraught with many sources of delight which they want.

If to these reasons for contentment, the reflecting husbandman or artificer adds another very material one, that changes of condition, which are attended with a breaking up and sacrifice of our ancient course and habit of living, never can be productive of happiness, he will perceive, I trust, that to covet the stations or fortunes of the rich, or so, however, to covet them, as to wish to seize them by force, or through the medium of public uproar and confusion, is not only wickedness, but folly, as mistaken in the end as in the means, *that it is not only to venture out to sea in a storm, but to venture for nothing.*

SERMONS ON PUBLIC OCCASIONS.

SERMON I.

CAUTION RECOMMENDED IN THE USE AND APPLICATION OF SCRIPTURE LANGUAGE:

A SERMON, PREACHED, JULY 17, 1777, IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CARLISLE, AT THE VISITATION OF THE RIGHT REVEREND LORD BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

To the Right Reverend Edmund, Lord Bishop of Carlisle, this discourse is inscribed, with sentiments of great respect and gratitude, by his Lordship's most dutiful, and most obliged servant and chaplain,

W. PALEY.

Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.—2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

It must not be dissembled that there are many real difficulties in the Christian Scriptures; whilst, at the same time, more, I believe, and greater, may justly be imputed to certain maxims of interpretation, which have obtained authority without reason, and are received without inquiry. One of these, as I apprehend, is the expecting to find, in the present circumstances of Christianity, a meaning for, or something answering to, every appellation and expression which occurs in Scripture; or, in other words, the applying to the personal condition of Christians at this day, those titles, phrases, propositions, and arguments, which belong solely to the situation of Christianity at its first institution.

I am aware of an objection which weighs much with many serious tempers, namely, that to suppose any part of Scripture to be inapplicable to us, is to suppose a part of Scripture to be useless; which seems to detract from the perfection we attribute to these oracles of our salvation. To this I can only answer, that it would have been one of the strangest things in the world, if the writings of the New Testament had not, like all other books, been composed for the apprehension, and consequently adapted to the circumstances, of the persons they were addressed to; and that it would have been equally strange, if the great, and in many respects, the inevitable alterations, which have taken place in those circumstances, did not vary the application of Scripture language.

I design, in the following discourse, to propose some examples of this variation, from which you will judge, as I proceed, of the truth and importance of our general observation.

First; At the time the Scriptures were written, none were baptized but converts, and none were converted but from conviction; and conviction produced, for the most part, a corresponding reformation of life and manners. Hence baptism was only another name for conversion, and conversion was supposed to be sincere: in this sense was our Saviour's promise, "he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved;"* and in the same his command to St. Paul, "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins:"† this was that baptism, "for the remission of sins," to which St. Peter invited the Jews upon the day of Pentecost;‡ that "washing of regeneration," by which, as St. Paul writes to Titus, "he saved us."§ Now, when we come to speak of the baptism which obtains in most Christian churches at present, where no conversion is supposed, or possible, it is manifest, that, if these expressions be applied at all, they must be applied with extreme qualification and reserve.

Secondly; The community of Christians were at first a handful of men, connected amongst themselves by the strictest union, and divided from the rest of the world by a real difference of principle and persuasion, and, what was more observable, by many outward peculiarities of worship and behaviour. This society, considered collectively, and as a body, were set apart from the rest of mankind for a more gracious dispensation, as well as actually distinguished by a superior purity of life and conversation. In this view, and in opposition to the unbelieving world, they were denominated in Scripture by titles of great seeming dignity and import; they were "elect," "called," "saints;"‖ they were "in Christ;"¶ they were

* Mark xvi. 16. † Acts xxii. 16.
‡ Acts ii. 38. § Titus iii. 5.
‖ Rom. viii. 33; i. 6, 7. ¶ Rom. viii. 1.

"a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people."* That is, these terms were employed to distinguish the professors of Christianity from the rest of mankind, in the same manner as the names of Greek and Barbarian, Jew and Gentile, distinguished the people of Greece and Israel from other nations. The application of such phrases to the whole body of Christians is become now obscure; partly because it is not easy to conceive of Christians as a body at all, by reason of the extent of their name and numbers, and the little visible union that subsists among them; and partly, because the heathen world, with whom they were compared, and to which comparison these phrases relate, is now ceased, or is removed from our observation. Supposing, therefore, these expressions to have a perpetual meaning, and, either forgetting the original use of them, or finding that, at this time, in a great measure exhausted and insignificant, we resort to a sense and an application of them, easier, it may be, to our comprehension, but extremely foreign from the design of their authors, namely, to distinguish individuals amongst us, the professors of Christianity, from one another: agreeably to which idea, the most flattering of these names, the "elect," "called," "saints," have, by bold and unlearned men, been appropriated to themselves and their own party with a presumption and conceit injurious to the reputation of our religion amongst "them that are without," and extremely disgusting to the sober part of its professors; whereas, that such titles were intended in a sense common to all Christian converts, is well argued from many places in which they occur, in which places you may plainly substitute the terms *convert*, or *converted*, for the strongest of these phrases, without any alteration of the author's meaning, *e. g.* "dare any of you go to law before the unjust and not before the *saints?*"† "Is any man *called* being circumcised, let him not become uncircumcised:"‡ "The church that is at Babylon *elected* together with you, saluteth you:"§ "Salute Andronicus and Junia, who were *in Christ* before me."‖

Thirdly; In opposition to the Jews, who were so much offended by the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, St. Paul maintains, with great industry, that it was God Almighty's intention from the first, to substitute, at a fit season, into the place of the rejected Israelites, a society of men taken indifferently out of all nations under heaven, and admitted to be the people of God upon easier and more comprehensive terms. This is expressed in the Epistle to the Ephesians, as follows:—"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself, that, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ."¶ This scheme of collecting such a society was what God foreknew before the foundation of the world; was what he did predestinate; was the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus; and, by consequence, this society, in their collective capacity, were the objects of this foreknowledge, predestination, and purpose; that is, in the language of the apostles, they were they "whom he did foreknow," they "whom he did predestinate;"* they were "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world;"† they were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."‡ This doctrine has nothing in it harsh or obscure. But what have we made of it? The rejection of the Jews, and the adopting another community into their place, composed, whilst it was carrying on, an object of great magnitude in the attention of the inspired writers who understood and observed it. This event, which engaged so much the thoughts of the apostle, is now only read of, and hardly that—the reality and the importance of it are little known or attended to. Losing sight, therefore, of the proper occasion of these expressions, yet willing, after our fashion, to adapt them to ourselves, and finding nothing else in our circumstances that suited with them, we have learnt at length to apply them to the final destiny of individuals at the day of judgment; and upon this foundation, has been erected a doctrine which lays the axe at once to the root of all religion, that of an absolute appointment to salvation or perdition independent of ourselves or any thing we can do; and what is extraordinary, those very arguments and expressions (Rom. chap. ix, x, xi.) which the apostle employed to vindicate the impartial mercies of God, against the narrow and excluding claims of Jewish prejudice, have been interpreted to establish a dispensation the most arbitrary and partial that could be devised.

Fourthly; The conversion of a grown person from Heathenism to Christianity, which is the case of conversion commonly intended in the Epistles, was a change of which we have now no just conception: it was a new name, a new language, a new society; a new faith, a new hope; a new object of worship, a new rule of life: a history was disclosed full of discovery and surprise; a prospect of futurity was unfolded, beyond imagination awful and august; the same description applies in a great part, though not entirely, to the conversion of a Jew. This, accompanied as it was with the pardon of every former sin, (Romans iii. 25,) was such an era in a man's life, so remarkable a period in his recollection, such a revolution of every thing that was most important to him, as might well admit of those strong figures and significant allusions by which it is described in Scripture: it was a "regeneration"§ or a new birth; it was to be "born again of God, and of the Spirit;"‖ it was to be "dead to sin," and "alive from the dead;"¶ it was to be buried with Christ in baptism, and raised together with him;"** it was "a new creature,"†† and a new creation;"‡‡ it was a translation from the condition of "slaves to that of sons;"§§ from "strangers and foreigners, to be fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."‖‖ It is manifest that no change equal or similar to the conversion of a Heathen can be experienced by us, or by any one educated in a Christian country, and to whom the facts, precepts, and hopes of Christianity, have been from his infancy familiar: yet we will retain the same language; and what has been the consequence? One sort of men, observing nothing in

* 1 Pet. ii. 9. † 1 Cor. vi. 1. ‡ 1 Cor. vii. 18.
§ 1 Pet. v. 13. ‖ Rom. xvi. 7.
¶ Eph. i. 9, 10; also see Eph. iii. 5, 6.

* Rom. viii. 29. † Eph. i. 4. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 2.
§ Tit. iii. 5. ‖ John i. 13; iii. 5. ¶ Rom. vi. 2. 13.
** Col. ii. 12. †† 2 Cor. v. 17. ‡‡ Eph. iv. 24.
§§ Gal. iv. 7. ‖‖ Eph. ii. 19.

the lives of Christians corresponding to the magnificence, if I may so say, of these expressions, have been tempted to conclude, that the expressions themselves had no foundation in truth and nature, or in any thing but the enthusiasm of their authors. Others again, understand these phrases to signify nothing more, than that gradual amendment of life and conversation, which reason and religion sometimes produce in particular Christians: of which interpretation it is truly said, that it degrades too much the proper force of language, to apply expressions of such energy and import to an event so ordinary in its own nature, and which is common to Christianity with every other moral institution. Lastly; a third sort, in order to satisfy these expressions to their full extent, have imagined to themselves certain perceptible impulses of the Holy Ghost, by which, in an instant, and in a manner, no doubt, sufficiently extraordinary, they are "regenerate and born of the Spirit;" they become "new creatures:" they are made the "sons of God," who were before the "children of wrath;" they are "freed from sin," and "from death;" they are chosen, that is, and sealed, without a possibility of fall, unto final salvation. Whilst the patrons of a more sober exposition have been often challenged, and sometimes confounded, with the question—If such expressions of Scripture do not mean this, what do they mean? To which we answer, Nothing: nothing, that is, to us; nothing to be found, or sought for, in the present circumstances of Christianity.

More examples might be produced, in which the unwary use of Scripture language has been the occasion of difficulties and mistakes—but I forbear—the present are sufficient to show, that it behoves every one who undertakes to explain the Scriptures, before he determine to whom or what an expression is now-a-days to be applied, to consider diligently whether it admit of any such application at all; or whether it is not rather to be restrained to the precise circumstances and occasion for which it was originally composed.

I make no apology for addressing this subject to this audience; because whatever relates to the interpretation of Scripture, relates, as I conceive, to us; for if, by any light we may cast upon these ancient books, we can enable and invite the people to read the Bible for themselves, we discharge, in my judgment, the first duty of our function; ever bearing in mind, that we are the ministers not of our own fame or fancies, but of the sincere Gospel of Jesus Christ.

SERMON II.

ADVICE, ADDRESSED TO THE YOUNG CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF CARLISLE,

IN A SERMON, PREACHED AT A GENERAL ORDINATION, HOLDEN AT ROSE CASTLE, ON SUNDAY, JULY 29, 1781.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is recommended to those who are preparing for holy orders, within the diocese of Carlisle, to read Collier's Sacred Interpreter, and the Four Gospels with Clark's Paraphrase; and to candidates for Priest's orders, carefully to peruse Taylor's Paraphrase on the Romans.

Let no man despise thy youth.—1 Tim. iv. 12.

THE author of this Epistle, with many better qualities, possessed in a great degree what we at this day call a *knowledge of the world.* He knew, that although age and honours, authority of station and splendour of appearance, usually command the veneration of mankind, unless counteracted by some degrading vice, or egregious impropriety of behaviour; yet, that where these advantages are wanting, where no distinction can be claimed from rank, importance from power, or dignity from years; in such circumstances, and under the inevitable depression of narrow fortunes, to procure and preserve respect requires both care and merit. The apostle also knew, and in the text taught his beloved convert, that to obtain the respect of those amongst whom he exercised his ministry, was an object deserving the ambition of a Christian teacher, not indeed for his own sake, but for theirs, there being little reason to hope that any would profit by his instruction who despised his person.

If St. Paul thought an admonition of this sort worthy of a place in his Epistle to Timothy, it cannot surely be deemed either beside or beneath the solemnity of this occasion, to deliver a few practicable rules of life and behaviour, which may recommend you to the esteem of the people, to whose service and salvation you are now about to dedicate your lives and labours.

In the first place, the stations which you are likely, for some time at least, to occupy in the church, although not capable of all the means of rendering service and challenging respect, which fall within the power of your superiors, are free from many prejudices that attend upon higher preferments. Interfering interests and disputed rights; or, where there is no place for dispute, the very claim and reception of legal dues, so long as what is received by the minister is taken from the parishioner, form oftentimes an almost insuperable obstruction to the best endeavours that can be used to conciliate the good-will of a neighbourhood. These difficulties perplex not *you.* In whatever contest with his parishioners the *principal* may be engaged, the *curate* has neither dispute nor demand to stand between him and the affections of his congregation.

Another and a still more favourable circumstance in your situation is this; being upon a level with the greatest part of your parishioners, you gain an access to their conversation and confidence, which is rarely granted to the superior clergy, without extraordinary address and the most insinuating advances on their parts. And this is a valuable privilege: for it enables you to inform yourselves of the moral and religious state of your flocks, of their wants and weaknesses, their habits and opinions, of the vices which prevail, and the principles from which they proceed; in a word, it enables you to study the distemper before you apply the remedy; and not only so, but to apply the remedy in the most commodious form, and with the best effect; by private persuasion and reproof, by gentle and unsuspected conveyances in the intimacy of friendship and opportunities of conversation. To this must be added the many occasions, which the living in habits of society with your parishioners affords you of reconciling dissensions, healing animosities, administering advice to the young and inexperienced, and consolation to age and misery. I put you in mind of this advantage, because the right use of it constitutes one of the most respectable employments not only of our order, but of human nature; and leaves you, believe me, little to envy in the condition of your superiors, or to regret in your own. It is true, that this description supposes you to reside so constantly, and to continue so long in the same parish, as to have formed some acquaintance with the persons and characters of your parishioners; and what scheme of doing good in your profession, or even of doing your duty, does not suppose this?

But whilst I recommend a just concern for our

reputation, and a proper desire of public esteem, I would by no means flatter that passion for praise and popularity, which seizes oftentimes the minds of young clergymen, especially when their first appearance in their profession has been received with more than common approbation. Unfortunate success! if it incite them to seek fame by affectation and hypocrisy, or lead, as vanity sometimes does, to enthusiasm and extravagance. This is not the taste or character I am holding out to your imitation. The popular preacher courts fame for its own sake, or for what he can make of it; the sincerely pious minister of Christ modestly invites esteem, only or principally, that it may lend efficacy to his instruction, and weight to his reproofs; the one seeks to be known and proclaimed abroad, the other is content with the silent respect of his neighbourhood, sensible that *that* is the theatre upon which alone his good name can assist him in the discharge of his duty.

It may be necessary likewise to caution you against some awkward endeavours to lift themselves into importance, which young clergymen not unfrequently fall upon; such as a conceited way of speaking, new airs and gestures, affected manners, a mimicry of the fashions, language, and diversions, or even of the follies and vices, of higher life; a hunting after the acquaintance of the great, a cold and distant behaviour towards their former equals, and a contemptuous neglect of their society. Nothing was ever gained by these arts, if they deserve the name of arts, but derision and dislike. Possibly they may not offend against any rule of moral probity; but if they disgust those with whom you are to live, and upon whom the good you do must be done, they defeat not only their own end, but, in a great measure, the very design and use of your vocation.

Having premised these few observations, I proceed to describe the qualities which principally conduce to the end we have at present in view, the possession of a fair and respected character.

And the first virtue (for so I will call it) which appears to me of importance for this purpose, is *frugality*. If there be a situation in the world in which profusion is without excuse, it is in that of a young clergyman who has little beside his profession to depend upon for his support. It is folly—it is ruin.—Folly, for whether it aim at luxury or show, it must fall miserably short of its design. In these competitions we are outdone by every rival. The provision which clergymen meet with upon their entrance into the church, is adequate, in most cases, to the wants and decencies of their situation, but to nothing more. To pretend to more, is to set up our poverty, not only as the subject of constant observation, but as a laughing-stock to every observer. Profusion is ruin; for it ends, and soon too, in debt, in injustice, and insolvency. You well know how meanly, in the country more especially, every man is thought of who cannot pay his credit; in what terms he is spoken of—in what light he is viewed—what a deduction this is from his good qualities—what an aggravation of his bad ones—what insults he is exposed to from his creditors, what contempt from all. Nor is this judgment far amiss. Let him not speak of honesty, who is daily practising deceit; for every man who is not paid is deceived. Let him not talk of liberality, who puts it out of his power to perform one act of it. Let him not boast of spirit, of honour, of independence, who fears the face of his creditors, and who meets a creditor in every street. There is no meanness in frugality: the meanness is in those shifts and expedients, to which extravagance is sure to bring men. Profusion is a very equivocal proof of generosity. The proper distinction is not between him who spends and him who saves; for they may be equally selfish; but between him who spends upon himself, and him who spends upon others. When I extol frugality, it is not to praise that minute parsimony which serves for little but to vex ourselves and tease those about us, but to persuade you to *economy upon a plan*, and that plan deliberately adjusted to your circumstances and expectations. Set out with it, and it is easy; to retrieve, out of a small income, is only not impossible. Frugality in this sense, we preach not only as an article of prudence, but as a lesson of virtue. Of this frugality it has been truly said, that it is the parent of liberty, of independence, of generosity.

A second essential part of a clergyman's character, is *sobriety*. In the scale of human vices there may be some more criminal than drunkenness, but none so humiliating. A clergyman cannot, without infinite confusion, produce himself in the pulpit before those who have been witnesses to his intemperance. The folly and extravagance, the rage and ribaldry, the boasts and quarrels, the idiotism and brutality of that condition, will rise up in their imaginations in full colours. To discourse of temperance, to touch in the remotest degree upon the subject, is but to revive his own shame. For you will soon have occasion to observe, that those who are the slowest in taking any part of a sermon to themselves, are surprisingly acute in applying it to the preacher.

Another vice, which there is the same, together with many additional, reasons for guarding you against, is *dissoluteness*. In my judgment, the crying sin and calamity of this country at present, is licentiousness in the intercourse of the sexes. It is a vice which hardly admits of argument or dissuasion. It can only be encountered by the censures of the good, and the discouragement it receives from the most respected orders of the community. What then shall we say, when they who ought to cure the malady, propagate the contagion? Upon this subject bear away one observation, that when you suffer yourselves to be engaged in any unchaste connexion, you not only corrupt an individual by your solicitations, but debauch a whole neighbourhood by the profligacy of your example.

The habit I will next recommend as the foundation of almost all other good ones, is retirement. Were I required to comprise my advice to young clergymen in one sentence, it should be in this, Learn to live alone. Half of your faults originate from the want of this faculty. It is impatience of solitude which carries you continually from your parishes, your home, and your duty; makes you foremost in every party of pleasure and place of diversion; dissipates your thoughts, distracts your studies, leads you into expense, keeps you in distress, puts you out of humour with your profession, causes you to place yourselves at the head of some low company, or to fasten yourselves as despicable retainers to the houses and society of the rich. Whatever may be the case with those, whose fortunes and opportunities can

command a constant succession of company; in situations like ours to be able to pass our time with satisfaction alone, and at home, is not only a preservative of character, but the very secret of happiness. Do what we will, we must be much and often by ourselves; if this be irksome, the main portions of life will be unhappy. Besides which, we are not the less qualified for society, because we are able to live without it. Our company will be the more welcome for being never obtruded. It is with this, as with many pleasures: he meets with it the oftenest, and enjoys it the best, who can most easily dispense with the want of it.

But what, you say, shall I do alone? reading is my proper occupation and my pleasure, but books are out of my reach, and beyond my purchase. They who make this complaint are such as seek nothing from books but amusement, and find amusement from none but works of narrative or imagination. This taste, I allow, cannot be supplied by any moderate expense or ordinary opportunities: but apply yourselves to study; take in hand any branch of useful science, especially of those parts of it which are subsidiary to the knowledge of religion, and a few books will suffice; for instance, a commentary upon the New Testament, read so as to be remembered, will employ a great deal of leisure very profitably. There is likewise another resource which you have forgot, I mean the composition of sermons. I am far from refusing you the benefit of other men's labours; I only require that they be called in not to flatter laziness, but to assist industry. You find yourself unable to furnish a sermon every week; try to compose one every month: depend upon it you will consult your own satisfaction, as well as the edification of your hearers; and that however inferior your compositions may be to those of others in some respects, they will be better delivered, and better received; they will compensate for many defects by a closer application to the ways and manners, the actual thoughts, reasoning, and language, the errors, doubts, prejudices, and vices, the habits, characters, and propensities of your congregation, than can be expected from borrowed discourses—at any rate, you are passing your time virtuously and honourably.

With retirement, I connect reserve; by which I mean, in the first place, some degree of delicacy in the choice of your company, and of refinement in your pleasures. Above all things, keep out of public-houses—you have no business there—your being seen to go in and out of them is disgraceful—your presence in these places entitles every man who meets you there, to affront you by coarse jests, by indecent or opprobrious topics of conversation—neither be seen at drunken feasts, boisterous sports, late hours, or barbarous diversions—let your amusements, like every thing about you, be still and quiet and unoffending. Carry the same reserve into your correspondence with your superiors Pursue preferment, if any prospects of it present themselves, not only by honourable means, but with moderate anxiety. It is not essential to happiness, perhaps not very conducive—were it of greater importance than it is, no more successful rule could be given you, than to do your duty quietly and contentedly, and to let things take their course. You may have been brought up with different notions, but be assured, that for once that preferment is forfeited by modesty, it is ten times lost by intrusion and importunity. Every one sympathises with neglected merit, but who shall lament over repulsed impudence?

The last expedient I shall mention, and, in conjunction with the others, a very efficacious one towards engaging respect, is seriousness in your deportment, especially in discharging the offices of your profession. Salvation is so awful a concern, that no human being, one would think, could be pleased with seeing it, or any thing belonging to it, treated with levity. For a moment, in a certain state of the spirits, men may divert themselves, or affect to be diverted, by sporting with their most sacred interests; but no one in his heart derides religion long—What are we—any of us?—religion soon will be our only care and friend. Seriousness, therefore, in a clergyman, is agreeable, not only to the serious, but to men of all tempers and descriptions. And seriousness is enough; a prepossessing appearance, a melodious voice, a graceful delivery, are indeed enviable accomplishments; but much, we apprehend, may be done without them. The great point is, to be thought in earnest. Seem not then to be brought to any part of your duty by constraint, to perform it with reluctance, to go through it in haste, or to quit it with symptoms of delight. In reading the services of the church, provided you manifest a conscientiousness of the meaning and importance of what you are about, and betray no contempt of your duty, or of your congregation, your manner cannot be too plain and simple. Your common method of speaking, if it be not too low, or too rapid, do not alter, or only so much as to be heard distinctly. I mention this, because your elocution is more apt to offend by straining and stiffness, than on the side of ease and familiarity. The same plainness and simplicity which I recommend in the delivery, prefer also in the style and composition of your sermons. Ornaments, or even accuracy of language, cost the writer much trouble, and produce small advantage to the hearer. Let the character of your sermons be truth and information, and a *decent particularity*. Propose one point in one discourse, and stick to it; a hearer never carries away more than one impression—disdain not the old fashion of dividing your sermons into heads—in the hands of a master this may be dispensed with; in yours, a sermon which rejects these helps to perspicuity, will turn out a bewildered rhapsody, without aim or effect, order or conclusion. In a word, strive to make your discourses useful, and they who profit by your preaching, will soon learn, and long continue, to be pleased with it.

I have now finished the enumeration of those qualities which are required in the clerical character, and which, wherever they meet, make even youth venerable, and poverty respected; which will secure esteem under every disadvantage of fortune, person, and situation, and notwithstanding great defects of abilities and attainments. But I must not stop here; a good name, fragrant and precious as it is, is by us only valued in subserviency to our duty, in subordination to a higher reward. If we are more tender of our reputation, if we are more studious of esteem than others, it is from a persuasion, that by first obtaining the respect of our congregation, and next

by availing ourselves of that respect, to promote amongst them peace and virtue, useful knowledge and benevolent dispositions, we are purchasing to ourselves a reversion and inheritance valuable above all price, important beyond every other interest or success.

Go, then, into the vineyard of the Gospel, and may the grace of God go with you! The religion you preach is true. Dispense its ordinances with seriousness, its doctrines with sincerity—urge its precepts, display its hopes, produce its terrors—"be sober, be vigilant"—"have a good report"—confirm the faith of others, testify and adorn your own, by the virtues of your life and the sanctity of your reputation—be peaceable, be courteous; condescending to men of the lowest condition—"apt to teach, willing to communicate;" so far as the immutable laws of truth and probity will permit, "be every thing unto all men, that ye may gain some."

The world will requite you with its esteem. The awakened sinner, the enlightened saint, the young whom you have trained to virtue, the old whom you have visited with the consolations of Christianity, shall pursue you with prevailing blessings and effectual prayers. You will close your lives and ministry with consciences void of offence, and full of hope.—To present at the last day even one recovered soul, reflect how grateful an offering it will be to *Him*, whose commission was to save a world—infinitely, no doubt, but still only in degree, does our office differ from *his*—himself the first-born; it was the business of his life, the merit of his death, the counsel of his Father's love, the exercise and consummation of his own, "to bring many brethren unto glory."

SERMON III.

A DISTINCTION OF ORDERS IN THE CHURCH DEFENDED UPON PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC UTILITY,

IN A SERMON, PREACHED IN THE CASTLE-CHAPEL, DUBLIN, AT THE CONSECRATION OF JOHN LAW, D. D. LORD BISHOP OF CLONFERT AND KILMACDUAGH, SEPTEMBER 21, 1782.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.—Ephesians iv. 11, 12.

In our reasoning and discourses upon the rules and nature of the Christian dispensation, there is no distinction which ought to be preserved with greater care, than that which exists between the institution, as it addresses the conscience and regulates the duty of particular Christians, and as it regards the discipline and government of the Christian church. It was our Saviour's design, and the first object of his ministry, to afford to a lost and ignorant world, such discoveries of their Creator's will, of their own interest, and future destination; such assured principles of faith, and rules of practice; such new motives, terms, and means of obedience; as might enable all, and engage many, to enter upon a course of life, which, by rendering the person who pursued it acceptable to God, would conduct him to happiness, in another stage of his existence.

It was a second intention of the Founder of Christianity, but subservient to the former, to associate those who consented to take upon them the profession of his faith and service, into a separate community, for the purpose of united worship and mutual edification, for the better transmission and manifestation of the faith that was delivered to them, but principally to promote the exercise of that fraternal disposition which their new relation to each other, which the visible participation of the same name and hope and calling, was calculated to excite.

From a view of these distinct parts of the evangelic dispensation, we are led to place a real difference between the religion of particular Christians, and the polity of Christ's church. The one is personal and individual—acknowledges no subjection to human authority—is transacted in the heart—is an account between God and our own consciences alone: the other, appertaining to society, (like every thing which relates to the joint interest and requires the co-operation of many persons,) is visible and external—prescribes rules of common order, for the observation of which, we are responsible not only to God, but to the society of which we are members, or, what is the same thing, to those with whom the public authority of the society is deposited.

But the difference which I am principally concerned to establish consists in this, that whilst the precepts of Christian morality and the fundamental articles of the faith, are for the most part, precise and absolute, are of perpetual, universal, and unalterable obligation; the laws which respect the discipline, instruction, and government of the community, are delivered in terms so general and indefinite as to admit of an application adapted to the mutable condition and varying exigencies of the Christian church. "As my father hath sent me, so send I you." "Let every thing be done decently and in order." "Lay hands suddenly on no man." "Let him that ruleth do it with diligence." "The things which thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." "For this cause left I thee, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city."

These are all general directions, supposing, indeed, the existence of a regular ministry in the church, but describing no specific order of pre-eminence or distribution of office and authority. If any other instances can be adduced more circumstantial than these, they will be found, like the appointment of the seven deacons, the collections for the saints, the laying by in store upon the first day of the week, to be rules of the society, rather than laws of the religion—recommendations and expedients fitted to the state of the several churches by those who then administered the affairs of them, rather than precepts delivered with a solemn design of fixing a constitution for succeeding ages. The just ends of religious as of civil union are eternally the same; but the means by which these ends may be best promoted and secured, will vary with the vicissitudes of time and occasion, will differ according to the local circumstances, the peculiar situation, the improvement, character, or even the prejudices and passions, of the several communities upon whose conduct and edification they are intended to operate.

The apostolic directions which are preserved in the writings of the New Testament, seem to exclude no ecclesiastical constitution which the experience and more instructed judgment of future ages might find it expedient to adopt. And this

reserve, if we may so call it, in the legislature of the Christian church, was wisely suited to its primitive condition, compared with its expected progress and extent. The circumstances of Christianity in the early period of its propagation were necessarily very unlike those which would take place when it became the established religion of great nations. The rudiments, indeed, of the future plant, were involved within the grain of mustard-seed, but still a different treatment was required for its sustentation when the birds of the air lodged amongst its branches. A small select society under the guidance of inspired teachers, without temporal rights and without property, founded in the midst of enemies, and living in subjection to unbelieving rulers, divided from the rest of the world by many singularities of conduct and persuasion, and adverse to the idolatry which public authority every where supported, differed so much from the Christian church after Christianity prevailed as the religion of the state; when its economy became gradually interwoven with the civil government of the country; when the purity and propagation of its faith were left to the ordinary expedients of human instruction and an authentic Scripture; when persecution and indigence were to be succeeded by legal security and public provision—clandestine and precarious opportunities of hearing the word and communicating in the rites of Christianity, by stationary pastors and appropriated seasons, as well as places, of religious worship and resort: I say, the situation of the Christian community was so different in the infant and adult state of Christianity, that the highest inconvenience would have followed from establishing a precise constitution which was to be obligatory upon both: the same disposition of affairs which was most commodious and conducive to edification in the one, becoming probably impracticable under the circumstances, or altogether inadequate to the wants of the other.

What farther recommends the forbearance observable in this part of the Christian institution, is the consideration, that as Christianity solicited admission into every country in the world, it cautiously refrained from interfering with the municipal regulations or civil condition of any. Negligent of every view, but what related to the deliverance of mankind from spiritual perdition, the Saviour of the world advanced no pretensions which, by disturbing the arrangements of human polity, might present an obstacle to the reception of his faith. We may ascribe it to this design, that he left the laws of his church so open and indeterminate, that whilst the ends of religious communion were sufficiently declared, the form of the society might be assimilated to the civil constitution of each country, to which it should always communicate strength and support in return for the protection it received. If there be any truth in these observations, they lead to this temperate and charitable conclusion, "that Christianity may be professed under any form of church government."

But though all things are lawful, all things are not expedient. If we concede to other churches the Christian legality of their constitution, so long as Christian worship and instruction are competently provided for, we may be allowed to maintain the advantage of our own, upon principles which all parties acknowledge—considerations of public utility. We may be allowed to contend, that whilst we imitate, so far as a great disparity of circumstances permits, the example, and what we apprehend to be the order, of the apostolic age, our church and ministry are inferior to none in the great object of their institution, their suitableness to promote and uphold the profession, knowledge, and influence, of pure Christianity. The separation of a particular order of men for the work of the ministry—the reserving to these exclusively, the conduct of public worship and the preaching of the word—the distribution of the country into districts, and the assigning of each district to the care and charge of its proper pastor —lastly, the appointment to the clergy of a maintenance independent of the caprice of their congregation, are measures of ecclesiastical policy which have been adopted by every national establishment of Christianity in the world. Concerning these points there exists no controversy. The chief article of regulation upon which the judgment of some protestant churches dissents from ours is, that whilst they have established a perfect parity among their clergy, we prefer a distinction of orders in the church, not only as recommended by the usage of the purest times, but as better calculated to promote, what all churches must desire, the credit and efficacy of the sacerdotal office.

The force and truth of this last consideration I will endeavour to evince.

First, the body of the clergy, in common with every regular society, must necessarily contain some internal provision for the government and correction of its members. Where a distinction of orders is not acknowledged, this government can only be administered by synods and assemblies, because the supposition of equality forbids the delegation of authority to single persons. Now, although it may be requisite to consult and collect the opinions of a community, in the momentous deliberations which ought to precede the establishment of those public laws by which it is to be bound; yet in every society the execution of these laws, the current and ordinary affairs of its government, are better managed by fewer hands. To commit personal questions to public debate, to refer every case and character which requires animadversion, to the suffrages and examination of a numerous assembly, what is it, but to feed and perpetuate contention, to supply materials for endless altercation, and opportunities for the indulgence of concealed enmity and private prejudices? The complaint of ages testifies, with how much inflammation, and how little equity, ecclesiastical conventions have conducted their proceedings; how apt intrigue has ever been to pervert inquiry, and clamour to confound discussion. Whatever may be the other benefits of equality, peace is best secured by subordination. And if this be a consideration of moment in every society, it is of peculiar importance to the clergy. Preachers of peace, ministers of charity and of reconciliation to the world, that constitution surely ill befits their office and character which has a tendency to engage them in contests and disputes with one another.

Secondly, the appointment of various orders in the church, may be considered as the stationing of ministers of religion in the various ranks of civil life. The distinctions of the clergy ought, in some measure, to correspond with the distinctions of lay-society, in order to supply each class of the people with a clergy of their own level and description, with whom they may live and

associate upon terms of equality. This reason is not imaginary nor insignificant. The usefulness of a virtuous and well-informed clergy consists neither wholly nor principally in their public preaching, or the stated functions of their order. It is from the example and in the society of such persons, that the requisites which prepare the mind for the reception of virtue and knowledge, a taste for serious reflection and discourse, habits of thought and reasoning, a veneration for the laws and awful truths of Christianity, a disposition to inquire, and a solicitude to learn, are best gained; at least, the decency of deportment, the sobriety of manners and conversation, the learning, the gravity, which usually accompany the clerical character, insensibly diffuse their influence over every company into which they are admitted. Is it of no importance to provide friends and companions of this character for the superior as well as for the middle orders of the community? Is it flattery to say, that the manners and society of higher life would suffer some depravation, from the loss of so many men of liberal habits and education, as at present, by occupying elevated stations in the church, are entitled to be received into its number? This intercourse would cease, if the clergy were reduced to a level with one another, and, of consequence, with the inferior part of the community. These distinctions, whilst they prevail, must be complied with. How much soever the moralist may despise, or the divine overlook, the discriminations of rank, which the rules or prejudices of modern life have introduced into society; when we have the world to instruct and to deal with, we must take and treat it as it is, not as the wishes or the speculations of philosophy would represent it to our view. When we describe the public as peculiarly interested in every thing which affects, though but remotely, the character of the great and powerful, it is not that the soul of the rich man is more precious than the salvation of the poor, but because his virtues and his vices have a more considerable and extensive effect.

Thirdly, they who behold the privileges and emoluments of the superior clergy with the most unfriendly inclination, profess nevertheless to wish, that the order itself should be respected; but how is this respect to be procured? It is equally impossible, to invest every clergyman with the decorations of affluence and rank, and to maintain the credit and reputation of an order which is altogether destitute of these distinctions. Individuals, by the singularity of their virtue or their talents, may surmount all disadvantages; but the order will be contemned. At present, every member of our ecclesiastical establishment communicates in the dignity which is conferred upon a few—every clergyman shares in the respect which is paid to his superiors—the ministry is honoured in the persons of prelates. Nor is this economy peculiar to our order. The professions of arms and of the law derive their lustre and esteem, not merely from their utility (which is a reason only to the few,) but from the exalted place in the scale of civil life, which hath been wisely assigned to those who fill stations of power and eminence in these great departments. And if this disposition of honours be approved in other kinds of public employment, why should not the credit and liberality of ours be upheld by the same expedient?

Fourthly, rich and splendid situations in the church have been justly regarded as prizes held out to invite persons of good hopes and ingenuous attainments to enter into its service. The value of the prospect may be the same, but the allurement is much greater, where opulent shares are reserved to reward the success of a few, than where, by a more equal partition of the fund, all indeed are competently provided for, but no one can raise even his hopes beyond a penurious mediocrity of subsistence and situation. It is certainly of consequence that young men of promising abilities be encouraged to engage in the ministry of the church; otherwise, our profession will be composed of the refuse of every other. None will be found content to stake the fortune of their lives in this calling, but they whom slow parts, personal defects, or a depressed condition of birth and education, preclude from advancement in any other. The vocation in time comes to be thought mean and uncreditable—study languishes—sacred erudition declines—not only the order is disgraced, but religion itself disparaged in such hands. Some of the most judicious and moderate of the presbyterian clergy have been known to lament this defect in their constitution. They see and deplore the backwardness in youth of active and well cultivated faculties, to enter into the church, and their frequent resolutions to quit it. Again, if a gradation of orders be necessary to invite candidates into the profession, it is still more so to excite diligence and emulation, to promote an attention to character and public opinion when they are in it; especially to guard against that sloth and negligence, into which men are apt to fall, who are arrived too soon at the limits of their expectations. We will not say, that the race is always to the swift, or the prize to the deserving; but we have never known that age of the church in which the advantage was not on the side of learning and decency.

These reasons appear to me to be well founded, and they have this in their favour, that they do not suppose too much; they suppose not any impracticable precision in the reward of merit, or any greater degree of disinterestedness, circumspection, and propriety in the bestowing of ecclesiastical preferment, than what actually takes place. They are, however, much strengthened, and our ecclesiastical constitution defended with yet greater success, when men of conspicuous and acknowledged merit are called to its superior stations: "when it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth." When pious labours and exemplary virtue, when distinguished learning, or eminent utility, when long or arduous services are repaid with affluence and dignity, when a life of severe and well-directed application to the studies of religion, when wasted spirits and declining health, are suffered to repose in honourable leisure, the good and wise applaud a constitution which has provided such things for such men.

Finally, let us reflect that these, after all, are but secondary objects. Christ came not to found an empire upon earth, or to invest his church with temporal immunities. He came "to seek and to save that which was lost;" to purify to himself from amidst the pollutions of a corrupt world, "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." As far as our establishment conduces to forward and facilitate these ends, so far we are sure it falls in with his design, and is sanctified by his authority.

And whilst they who are intrusted with its government employ their cares, and the influence of their stations, in judicious and unremitting endeavours to enlarge the dominion of virtue and of Christianity over the hearts and affections of mankind, whilst "by pureness, by knowledge," by the aids of learning, by the piety of their example, they labour to inform the consciences and improve the morals of the people committed to their charge, they secure to themselves, and to the church in which they preside, peace and permanency, reverence and support—what is infinitely more, they "save their own souls;" they prepare for the approach of that tremendous day, when Jesus Christ shall return again to the world and to his church, at once the gracious rewarder of the toils, and patience, and fidelity of his servants, and the strict avenger of abused power and neglected duty.

SERMON IV.

THE USE AND PROPRIETY OF LOCAL AND OCCASIONAL PREACHING:

A CHARGE,

DELIVERED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF CARLISLE, IN THE YEAR 1790.

Reverend Brethren,—The late Archbishop Secker, whose memory is entitled to public respect, as on many accounts, so especially for the judgment with which he described, and the affecting seriousness with which he recommended the duties of his profession, in one of his charges to the clergy of his diocese,* exhorts them "to make their sermons local." I have always considered this advice as founded in a knowledge of human life, but as requiring, in its application, a more than ordinary exercise of Christian prudence. Whilst I repeat therefore the rule itself, with great veneration for the authority by which it was delivered, I think it no unfit employment of the present opportunity, to enlarge so far upon its use and meaning, as to point out some of the instances in which it may be adopted, with the probability of making salutary impressions upon the minds of our hearers.

But, before I proceed, I would warn you, and that with all the solemnity that can belong to any admonition of mine, against rendering your discourses, *so local*, as to be pointed and levelled at particular persons in your congregation. This species of address may produce in the party for whom it is intended, confusion perhaps and shame, but not with their proper fruits of penitence and humility. Instead of which, these sensations will be accompanied with bitter resentment against the preacher, and a kind of obstinate and determined opposition to his reproof. He will impute your officiousness to personal enmity, to party spirit, to the pleasure of triumphing over an adversary without interruption or reply, to insult assuming the form of advice, or to any motive rather than a conscientious solicitude for the amendment and salvation of your flock. And as the person himself seldom profits by admonitions conveyed in this way, so are they equally useless, or perhaps noxious, to the rest of the assembly; for the moment the congregation discover to whom the chastisement is directed, from that moment they cease to apply any part of it to themselves. They are not edified, they are not affected; on the contrary, they are diverted, by descriptions of which they see the design, and by invectives of which they think they comprehend the aim. Some who would feel strongly the impropriety of gross and evident personalities, may yet hope to hit their mark by covert and oblique allusions. Now of this scheme, even when conducted with the greatest skill, it may be observed, that the allusions must either be perceived, or not. If they be not perceived, they fail of the effect intended by them; if they be, they are open to the objections which lie against more explicit and undissembled attacks. Whenever we are conscious, in the composition of our discourses, of a view to particular characters in our congregation or parish, we ought to take for granted that our view will be understood. Those applications therefore, which, if they were direct, would produce more bad emotions than good ones, it is better to discard entirely from our sermons; that is to say, it is better to lay aside the design altogether, than to attempt to disguise it by a management which is generally detected, and which, if not seen through, defeats its purpose by its obscurity. The crimes then of individuals let us reserve for opportunities of private and seasonable expostulation. Happy is the clergyman who has the faculty of communicating advice and remonstrance with persuasion and effect, and the virtue to seize and improve every proper occasion of doing it; but in the pulpit, let private characters be no otherwise adverted to, than as they fall in with the delineations of sins and duties which our discourses must necessarily contain, and which, whilst they avoid personalities, can never be too close or circumstantial. For the same reason that I think personal allusions reprehensible, I should condemn any, even the remotest, reference to party or political transactions and disputes. These are at all times unfit subjects not only of discussion in the pulpit, but of hints and surmises. The Christian preacher has no other province than that of religion and morality. He is seldom led out of his way, by honourable motives, and, I think, never with a beneficial effect.

Having premised this necessary caution, I return to the rule itself. By "local" sermons I would understand, what the reverend prelate who used the expression seems principally to have meant by it, sermons adapted to the particular state of thought and opinion which we perceive to prevail in our congregation. A careful attention to this circumstance is of the utmost importance, because, as *it* varies, the same sermon may do a great deal of good, none at all, or much harm. So that it is not the truth of what we are about to offer which alone we ought to consider, but whether the argument itself be likely to correct or to

* Archbishop of Canterbury's Third Charge to his Clergy.—Abp. Secker's Works, vol. iv.

promote the turn and bias of opinion to which we already perceive too strong a tendency and inclination. Without this circumspection, we may be found to have imitated the folly of the architect who placed his buttress on the wrong side. The more the column pressed, the more firm was its construction; and the deeper its foundation, the more certainly it hastened the ruin of the fabric. I do not mean that we should, upon any emergency, advance what is not true; but that, out of many truths, we should select those, the consideration of which seems best suited to rectify the dispositions of thought, that were previously declining into error or extravagancy. For this model of preaching we may allege the highest of all possible authorities, the example of our blessed Saviour himself. He always had in view the posture of mind of the persons whom he addressed. He did not entertain the Pharisees with invectives against the open impiety of their Sadducean rivals; nor, on the other hand, did he sooth the Sadducee's ear with descriptions of Pharisaical pomp and folly. In the presence of the Pharisee he preached against hypocrisy: to the Sadducees he proved the resurrection of the dead. In like manner, of that known enmity which subsisted between the Jews and Samaritans, this faithful Teacher took no undue advantage, to make friends or proselytes of either. Upon the Jews he inculcated a more comprehensive benevolence: with the Samaritan he defended the orthodoxy of the Jewish creed.

But I apprehend that I shall render my advice more intelligible, by exemplifying it in two or three instances, drawn from what appears to be the predominant disposition and religious character of this country, and of the present times.

In many former ages of religion, the strong propensity of men's minds was to overvalue positive duties; which temper, when carried to excess, not only multiplied unauthorized rites and observances, not only laid an unwarrantable stress upon those which were prescribed; but, what was worst of all, led men to expect, that, by a punctual attention to the ordinances of religion, they could compound for a relaxation of its weighty and difficult duties of personal purity and relative justice. This was the depraved state of religion amongst the Jews when our Saviour appeared; and it was the degeneracy, against which some of the most forcible of his admonitions, and the severest of his reproofs, were directed. Yet, notwithstanding that Christ's own preaching, as well as the plan and spirit of his religion, were as adverse as possible to the exalting or overvaluing of positive institutions, the error which had corrupted the old dispensation, revived under the new; and revived with double force, insomuch as to transform Christianity into a service more prolix and burdensome than the Jewish, and to ascribe an efficacy to certain religious performances, which, in a great measure, superseded the obligations of substantial virtue. That age, however, with us, is long since past. I fear there is room to apprehend that we are falling into mistakes of a contrary kind. Sadducees are more common amongst us than Pharisees. We seem disposed, not only to cast off the decent offices, which the temperate piety of our church hath enjoined, as aids of devotion, calls to repentance, or instruments of improvement, but to contemn and neglect, under the name of forms and ceremonies, even those rites, which, forasmuch as they were ordained by the divine Founder of our religion, or by his inspired messengers, and ordained with a view of their continuing in force through future generations, are entitled to be accounted parts of Christianity itself. In this situation of religion, and of men's thoughts with respect of it, he makes a bad choice of his subject, who discourses upon the futility of rites and ordinances, upon their insignificancy when taken by themselves, or even who insists too frequently, and in terms too strong, upon their inferiority to moral precepts. We are rather called upon to sustain the authority of those institutions which proceed from Christ or his apostles, and the reasonableness and credit of those which claim no higher original than public appointment. We are called upon to contend with respect to the first, that they cannot be omitted with safety any more than other duties; that the will of God once ascertained, is the immediate foundation of every duty; that, when this will is known, it makes little difference to us what is the subject of it, still less by what denomination the precept is called, under what class or division the duty is arranged. If it be commanded, and we have sufficient reason to believe that it is so, it matters nothing whether the obligation be moral or natural, or positive or instituted. He who places before him the will of God as the rule of his life, will not refine, or even dwell much, upon these distinctions. The ordinances of Christianity, it is true, are all of them significant. Their meaning and even their use, is not obscure. But were it otherwise; was the design of any positive institution inexplicable; did it appear to have been proposed only as an exercise of obedience; it was not for us to hesitate in our compliance. Even to inquire, with too much curiosity and impatience, into the cause and reason of a religious command, is no evidence of an humble and submissive disposition; of a disposition, I mean, humble under the Deity's government of his creation, and submissive to his will however signified.

It may be seasonable also to maintain, what I am convinced is true, that the principle of general utility, which upholds moral obligation itself, may, in various instances, be applied to evince the duty of attending upon positive institutions; in other words, that the difference between natural and positive duties is often more in the name than in the thing. The precepts of natural justice are therefore only binding upon the conscience, because the observation of them is necessary or conducive to the prosperity and happiness of social life. If there be, as there certainly are, religious institutions which contribute greatly to form and support impressions upon the mind, that render men better members of civilized community; if these institutions can only be preserved in their reputation and influence by the general respect which is paid to them; there is the same reason to each of us for bearing our part in these observances, that there is for discharging the most acknowledged duties of natural religion. When I say, "the reason is the same," I mean that it is the same in *kind*. The *degree* of strength and cogency which this reason possesses in any particular case, must always depend upon the value and importance of the particular duty; which admits of great variety. But moral and positive duties do not in this respect differ more than moral duties differ from one another. So that

when men accustom themselves to look upon positive duties as universally and necessarily inferior to moral ones, as of a subordinate species, as placed upon a different foundation, or deduced from a different original; and consequently to regard them as unworthy of being made a part of their plan of life, or of entering into their sense of obligation, they appear to be egregiously misled by names. It is our business, not to aid, but to correct, the deception. Still nevertheless, is it as true as ever it was, that "except we exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that "the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath;" that "the weightier matters of the law are faith, justice, and mercy;" but to insist strenuously, and, as some do, almost exclusively, upon these points at present, tends to diminish the respect for religious ordinances, which is already too little; and whilst it guards against dangers that have ceased to exist, augments those which are really formidable.

Again: Upon the first reformation from Popery, a method very much prevailed in the seceding churches, of resolving the whole of religion into faith; *good works*, as they were called, or the practice of virtue, holding not only a secondary but even distant place in value and esteem, being represented, indeed, as possessing no share or efficacy in the attainment of human salvation. This doctrine we have seen revived in our own times, and carried to still greater lengths. And it is a theory, or rather perhaps a language, which required, whilst it lasted, very serious animadversion; not only because it disposed men to rest in an unproductive faith, without endeavours to render themselves useful by exertion and activity; not only because it was naturally capable of being converted to the encouragement of licentiousness; but because it misrepresented Christianity as a moral institution, by making it place little stress upon the distinction of virtue and vice, and by making it require the practice of external duties, if it require them at all, only as casual, neglected, and almost unthought of consequences, of that faith which it extolled, instead of directing men's attention to them, as to those things which alone compose an unquestionable and effective obedience to the divine will. So long as this turn of mind prevailed, we could not be too industrious in bringing together and exhibiting to our hearers those many and positive declarations of Scripture, which enforce, and insist upon, practical religion; which divide mankind into those who do good, and those who do evil; which hold out to the one, favour and happiness, to the other, repulse and condemnation. The danger, however, from this quarter, is nearly overpast. We are, on the contrary, setting up a kind of philosophical morality, detached from religion, and independent of its influence, which may be cultivated, it is said, as well without Christianity as with it; and which, if cultivated, renders religion and religious institutions superfluous. A mode of thought so contrary to truth, and so derogatory from the value of revelation, cannot escape the vigilance of a Christian ministry. We are entitled to ask upon what foundation this morality rests. If it refer to the divine will, (and, without that, where will it find its sanctions, or how support its authority?) there cannot be a conduct of the understanding more irrational, than to appeal to those intimations of the Deity's character which the light and order of nature afford, as to the rule and measure of our duty, yet to disregard, and affect to overlook, the declarations of his pleasure which Christianity communicates. It is impossible to distinguish between the authority of natural and revealed religion. We are bound to receive the precepts of revelation for the same reason that we comply with the dictates of nature. He who despises a command which proceeds from his Maker, no matter by what means, or through what medium, instead of advancing, as he pretends to do, the dominion of reason, and the authority of natural religion, disobeys the first injunction of both. Although it be true what the apostle affirms—that, "when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, they are a law unto themselves;" that is, they will be accepted together with those who are instructed in the law and obey it: yet is this truth not applicable to such, as, having a law, contemn it, and, with the means of access to the word of God, keep themselves at a voluntary distance from it. This temper, whilst it continues, makes it necessary for us to assert the superiority of a religious principle above every other by which human conduct can be regulated: more especially above that fashionable system, which recommends virtue only as a true and refined policy, which policy in effect is, and in the end commonly proves itself to be, nothing else than a more exquisite cunning, which by a specious behaviour in the easy and visible concerns of life, collects a fund of reputation, in order either to cherish more securely concealed vices, or to reserve itself for some great stroke of selfishness, perfidy, and desertion, in a pressing conjuncture of fortunes. Nor less justly may we superinduce the guidance of Christianity to the direction of sentiment; which depends so much upon constitution, upon early impressions, upon habit and imitation, that unless it be compared with, and adjusted by, some safer rule, it can in no wise be trusted. Least of all ought we to yield the authority of religion to the law of honour, a law (if it deserve that name,) which, beside its continual mutability, is at best but a system of manners suited to the intercourse and accommodation of higher life; and which consequently neglects every duty, and permits every vice, that has no relation to these purposes. Amongst the rules which contend with religion for the government of life, the law of the land also has not a few, who think it very sufficient to act up to its direction, and to keep within the limits which it prescribes: and this sort of character is common in our congregations. We are not to omit, therefore, to apprise those who make the statutes of the realm the standard of their duty, that they propose to themselves a measure of conduct totally inadequate to the purpose. The boundaries which nature has assigned to human authority and control, the partial ends to which every legislator is obliged to confine his views, prevent human laws, even were they, what they never are, as perfect as they might be made, from becoming competent rules of life to any one who advances his hopes to the attainment of God Almighty's favour. In contradistinction, then, to these several systems which divide a great portion of mankind amongst them, we preach "faith which worketh by love," that principle of action and restraint which is found in a Christian alone. It possesses

qualities to which none of *them* can make pretensions. It operates where they fail; is present upon all occasions, firm upon the greatest; pure as under the inspection of a vigilant omniscience; innocent where guilt could not be discovered; just, exact, and upright, without a witness to its proceedings; uniform amidst the caprices of fashion, unchanged by the vicissitudes of popular opinion; often applauded, not seldom misunderstood, it holds on its straight and equal course, through "good report and evil report," through encouragement and neglect, approbation and disgrace. If the philosopher or the politician can point out to us any influence but that of Christianity which has these properties, I had almost said which does not want them all, we will listen with reverence to his instruction. But until this be done, we may be permitted to resist every plan which would place virtue upon any other foundation, or seek final happiness through any other medium, than faith in Jesus Christ. At least whilst an inclination to these rival systems remains, no good end, I am apt to think, is attained by decrying faith under any form, by stating the competition between faith and good works, or by pointing out, with too much anxiety, even the abuses and extravagances into which the doctrine of salvation by faith alone has sometimes been carried. The truth is, that, in the two subjects which I have considered, we are in such haste to fly from enthusiasm and superstition, that we are approaching towards an insensibility to all religious influence. I certainly do not mean to advise you to endeavour to bring men back to enthusiasm and superstition, but to retard, if you can, their progress towards an opposite and a worse extreme; and both in these, and in all other instances, to regulate the choice of your subjects, by the particular bias and tendency of opinion which you perceive already to prevail amongst your hearers, and by a consideration, not of the truth only of what you deliver, which, however, must always be an indispensable condition, but of its effects, and those not the effects which it would produce upon sound, enlightened, and impartial judgments, but what are likely to take place in the weak and pre-occupied understandings with which we have to do.

Having thus considered the rule as it applies to the argument of our discourses, in which its principal importance consists, I proceed to illustrate its use as it relates to another object—the means of exciting attention. The transition from local to occasional sermons is so easy, and the reason for both is so much the same, that what I have further to add will include the one as well as the other. And though nothing more be proposed in the few directions which I am about to offer, than to move and awaken the attention of our audience, yet is this a purpose of no inconsiderable magnitude. We have great reason to complain of listlessness in our congregations. Whether this be their fault or ours, the fault of neither or of both, it is much to be desired that it could by any means be removed. Our sermons are in general more informing, as well as more correct and chastised both in matter and composition, than those of any denomination of dissenting teachers. I wish it were in our power to render them as impressive as some of theirs seem to be. Now I think we may observe that we are heard with somewhat more than ordinary advertency, whenever our discourses are recommended by any occasional propriety. The more, therefore, of these proprieties we contrive to weave into our preaching, the better. One which is very obvious, and which should never be neglected, is that of making our sermons as suitable as we can to the service of the day. On the principal fasts and festivals of the church, the subjects which they are designed to commemorate, ought invariably to be made the subjects of our discourses. Indeed, the best sermon, if it do not treat of the argument which the congregation come prepared to hear, is received with coldness, and with a sense of disappointment. This respect to the order of public worship almost every one pays. But the adaptation, I apprehend, may be carried much farther. Whenever any thing like a unity of subject is pursued throughout the collect, the epistle, and gospel of the day, that subject is with great advantage revived in the pulpit. It is perhaps to be wished that this unity had been more consulted in the compilation of this part of the liturgy than it has been. When from the want of it a subject is not distinctly presented to us, there may, however, be some portion of the service more striking than the rest, some instructive parable, some interesting narration, some concise but forcible precept, some pregnant sentence, which may be recalled to the hearer's attention with peculiar effect. I think it no contemptible advantage if we even draw our text from the epistle or gospel, or the psalms or lessons. Our congregation will be more likely to retain what they hear from us, when it, in any manner, falls in with what they have been reading in their prayer-books, or when they are afterwards reminded of it by reading the psalms and lessons at home. But there is another species of accommodation of more importance, and that is the choice of such disquisitions, as may either meet the difficulties or assist the reflections, which are suggested by the portions of Scripture that are delivered from the reading-desk. Thus, whilst the wars of Joshua and the Judges are related in the course of the lessons which occupy some of the first Sundays after Trinity, it will be very seasonable to explain the reasons upon which that dispensation was founded, the moral and beneficial purposes which are declared to have been designed, and which were probably accomplished, by its execution; because such an explanation will obviate the doubts concerning either the divine goodness or the credibility of the narrative which may arise in the mind of a hearer, who is not instructed to regard the transaction as a method of inflicting an exemplary, just, and necessary punishment. In like manner, whilst the history of the delivery of the law from mount Sinai, or rather the recapitulation of that history by Moses, in the book of Deuteronomy, is carried on in the Sunday lessons which are read between Easter and Whitsunday, we shall be well engaged in discourses upon the *commandments* which stand at the head of that institution, in showing from the history their high original and authority, and in explaining their reasonableness, application, and extent. Whilst the history of Joseph is successively presented to the congregation during the Sundays in Lent, we shall be very negligent of the opportunity, if we do not take occasion to point out to our hearers, those observations upon the benevolent but secret direction, the wise though circuitous measures, of Providence, of which this beautiful passage of Scrip-

ture supplies a train of apposite examples. There are, I doubt not, other series of subjects dictated by the service as edifying as these; but these I propose as illustrations of the rule.

Next to the service of the church, the season of the year may be made to suggest useful and appropriate topics of meditation. The beginning of a new year has belonging to it a train of very solemn reflections. In the devotional pieces of the late Dr. Johnson, this occasion was never passed by. We may learn from these writings the proper use to be made of it; and by the example of that excellent person, how much a pious mind is wont to be affected by this memorial of the lapse of life. There are also certain proprieties which correspond with the different parts of the year. For example, the wisdom of God in the work of the creation is a theme which ought to be reserved for the return of the spring, when nature renews, as it were, her activity; when every animal is cheerful and busy, and seems to feel the influence of its Maker's kindness; when our senses and spirits, the objects and enjoyments that surround us, accord and harmonize with those sentiments of delight and gratitude, which this subject, above all others, is calculated to inspire. There is no devotion so genuine as that which flows from these meditations, because it is unforced and self-excited. There is no frame of mind more desirable, and, consequently, no preaching more useful, than that which leads the thought to this exercise. It is laying a foundation for Christianity itself. If it be not to sow the seed, it is at least to prepare the soil. The evidence of revelation arrives with much greater ease at an understanding, which is already possessed by the persuasion, that an unseen intelligence framed and conducts the universe; and which is accustomed to refer the order and operations of nature to the agency of a supreme will. The influence also of religion is almost always in proportion to the degree and strength of this conviction. It is, moreover, a species of instruction of which our hearers are more capable than we may at first sight suppose. It is not necessary to be a philosopher, or to be skilled in the names and distinctions of natural history, in order to perceive marks of contrivance and design in the creation. It is only to turn our observation to them. Now, beside that this requires neither more ability nor leisure than every man can command, there are many things in the life of a country parishioner which will dispose his thoughts to the employment. In his fields, amidst his flocks, in the progress of vegetation, the structure, faculties, and manners, of domestic animals, he has constant occasion to remark proofs of intention and of consummate wisdom. The minister of a country parish is never, therefore, better engaged, than when he is assisting this turn of contemplation. Nor will he ever do it with so much effect, as when the appearance and face of external nature conspire with the sentiments which he wishes to excite.

Again: if we would enlarge upon the various bounty of Providence, in furnishing a regular supply for animal, and especially for human subsistence, not by one, but by numerous and diversified species of food and clothing, we shall be best heard in the time and amidst the occupations of harvest, when our hearers are reaping the effects of those contrivances for their support, and of that care for their preservation, which their Father which is in heaven hath exercised for them. If the year has been favourable, we rejoice with them in the plenty which fills their granaries, covers their tables, and feeds their families. If otherwise, or less so, we have still to remark, how through all the husbandman's disappointments, through the dangers and inclemencies of precarious seasons, a competent proportion of the fruits of the earth is conducted to its destined purpose. We may observe also to the repining farmer, that the value, if not the existence, of his own occupation, depends upon the very uncertainty of which he complains. It is found to be almost universally true, that the partition of the profits between the owner and the occupier of the soil, is in favour of the latter, in proportion to the risk which he incurs by the disadvantage of the climate. This is a very just reflection, and particularly intelligible to a rural audience. We may add, when the occasion requires it, that scarcity itself hath its use. By acting as a stimulus to new exertions and to farther improvements, it often produces, through a temporary distress, a permanent benefit.

Lastly; sudden, violent, or untimely deaths, or death accompanied by any circumstances of surprise or singularity, usually leave an impression upon a whole neighbourhood. A Christian teacher is wanting in attention to opportunities who does not avail himself of this impression. The uncertainty of life requires no proof. But the power and influence which this consideration shall obtain over the decisions of the mind, will depend greatly upon the circumstances under which it is presented to the imagination. Discourses upon the subject come with tenfold force, when they are directed to a heart already touched by some near, recent, and affecting example of human mortality. I do not lament that funeral sermons are discontinued amongst us. They generally contained so much of unseasonable and oftentimes undeserved panegyric, that the hearers came away from them, rather with remarks in their mouths upon what was said of the deceased, than with any internal reflections upon the solemnity which they had left, or how nearly it related to their own condition. But by decent allusions in the stated course of our preaching to events of this sort, or by, what is better, such a well-timed choice of our subject, as may lead our audience to make the allusion for themselves, it is possible, I think, to retain much of the good effect of funeral discourses, without their adulation, and without exciting vain curiosity.

If other occurrences have arisen within our neighbourhood, which serve to exemplify the progress and fate of vice, the solid advantages and ultimate success of virtue, the providential discovery of guilt or protection of innocence, the folly of avarice, the disappointments of ambition, the vanity of worldly schemes, the fallaciousness of human foresight; in a word, which may remind us, "what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue," and thereby induce us to collect our views and endeavours to one point, the attainment of final salvation; such occurrences may be made to introduce topics of serious and useful meditation. I have heard popular preachers amongst the methodists avail themselves of these occasions with very powerful effect. It must be acknowledged that they frequently transgress the limits of decorum and propriety, and that these transgressions wound the modesty of a cultivated ear.

But the method itself is not to be blamed. Under the correction of a sounder judgment it might be rendered very beneficial. Perhaps, as hath been already intimated, the safest way is, not to refer to these incidents by any direct allusion, but merely to discourse at the time upon subjects which are allied to, and connected with them.

The sum of what I have been recommending amounts to this: that we consider diligently the probable effects of our discourses, upon the particular characters and dispositions of those who are to hear them; but that we apply this consideration solely to the choice of truths, by no means to the admission of falsehood or insincerity:* Secondly, that we endeavour to profit by circumstances, that is, to assist, not the reasoning, but the efficacy of our discourses, by an opportune and skilful use of the service of the church, the season of the year, and of all such occurrences and situations as are capable of receiving a religious turn, and such as, being yet recent in the memory of our hearers, may dispose their minds for the admission and influence of salutary reflections.

My Reverend Brethren, I am sensible that the discourse with which I have now detained you, is not of that kind which is usually delivered at a Chancellor's visitation. But since (by the favour of that excellent prelate, who by me must long be remembered with gratitude and affection) I hold another public station in the diocese, I embrace the only opportunity afforded me of submitting to you that species of counsel and exhortation, which, with more propriety perhaps, you would have received from me in the character of your archdeacon, if the functions of that office had remained entire.

* This distinction fixes the limits of exoteric doctrine, as far as any thing called by that name is allowable to a Christian teacher.

SERMON V.

DANGERS INCIDENTAL TO THE CLERICAL CHARACTER, STATED,

IN A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, AT GREAT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ON SUNDAY, JULY 5, BEING COMMENCEMENT SUNDAY.

To Lowther Yates, D. D. Vice Chancellor, and the Heads of Colleges in the University of Cambridge, as a testimony to many of them, of the affection with which the Author retains his academical friendships; and to all, of the respect with which he regards their stations; the following discourse is inscribed by their faithful servant, *W. PALEY.*

Lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.—
I Corinthians ix.—Part of the 27th verse.

These words discover the anxiety, not to say the fears, of the writer, concerning the event of his personal salvation; and, when interpreted by the words which precede them, strictly connect that event with the purity of his personal character.

It is extremely material to remember who it was that felt this deep solicitude for the fate of his spiritual interests, and the persuasion that his acceptance (in so far as it is procured by human endeavours) would depend upon the care and exactness with which he regulated his own passions, and his own conduct; because, if a man ever existed, who, in the zeal and labour with which he served the cause of religion, in the ardour or the efficacy of his preaching, in his sufferings, or his success, might hope for some excuse to indulgence, some licence for gratifications which were forbidden to others, it was the author of the text which has been now read to you. Yet the apostle appears to have known, and by his knowledge teaches us, that no exertion of industry, no display of talents, no public merit, however great, or however good and sacred be the cause in which it is acquired, will compensate for the neglect of personal self-government.

This, in my opinion, is an important lesson to all: to none, certainly, can it be more applicable, than it is in every age to the teachers of religion; for a little observation of the world must have informed us, that the human mind is prone, almost beyond resistance, to sink the weakness or the irregularities of private character in the view of public services; that this propensity is the strongest in a man's own case; that it prevails more powerfully in religion than in other subjects, inasmuch as the teachers of religion consider themselves (and rightly do so) as ministering to the higher interests of human existence.

Still farther, if there be causes, as I believe there are, which raise extraordinary difficulties in the way of those who are engaged in the offices of religion; circumstances even of disadvantage in the profession and character, as far as relates to the conservation of their own virtue; it behoves them to adopt the apostle's caution with more than common care, because it is only to prepare themselves for dangers to which they are more than commonly exposed.

Nor is there good reason for concealing, either from ourselves or others, any unfavourable dispositions which the nature of our employment or situation may tend to generate: for, be they what they will, they only prove, that it happens to us according to the condition of human life, with many benefits to receive some inconveniences; with many helps to experience some trials: that, with many peculiar motives to virtue, and means of improvement in it, some obstacles are presented to our progress, which it may require a distinct and positive effort of the mind to surmount.

I apprehend that I am stating a cause of no inconsiderable importance, when amongst these impediments I mention, in the first place, the insensibility to religious impression, which a constant conversation with religious subjects, and, still more, a constant intermixture with religious offices, is wont to induce. Such is the frame of the human constitution, (and calculated also for the wisest purposes,) that whilst all active habits are facilitated and strengthened by repetition, impressions under which we are passive, are weakened and diminished. Upon the first of these properties depends, in a great measure, the exercise of the arts of life: upon the second, the capacity which the mind possesses of adapting

itself to almost every situation. This quality is perceived in numerous, and for the most part beneficial examples. Scenes of terror, spectacles of pain, objects of loathing and disgust, so far lose their effect with their novelty, as to permit professions to be carried on, and conditions of life to be endured, which otherwise, although necessary, would be insupportable. It is a quality, however, which acts, as other parts of our frame do, by an operation which is general; hence it acts also in instances in which its influence is to be corrected; and, amongst these, in religion. Every attentive Christian will have observed how much more powerfully he is affected by any form of worship which is uncommon, than with the familiar returns of his own religious offices. He will be sensible of the difference when he approaches, a few times in the year, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; if he should be present at the visitation of the sick; or even, if that were unusual to him, at the sight of a family assembled in prayer. He will perceive it also upon entering the doors of a dissenting congregation; a circumstance which has misled many, by causing them to ascribe to some advantage in the conduct of public worship, what, in truth, is only the effect of new impressions. Now, by how much a lay frequenter of religious worship finds himself less warmed and stimulated by ordinary, than by extraordinary acts of devotion, by so much, it may be expected, that a clergyman, habitually conversant with the offices of religion, will be less moved and stimulated than he is. What then is to be done? It is by an effort of reflection; by a positive exertion of the mind; by knowing this tendency, and by setting ourselves expressly to resist it; that we are to repair the decays of spontaneous piety. We are no more to surrender ourselves to the mechanism of our frame, than to the impulse of our passions. We are to assist our sensitive by our rational nature. We are to supply this infirmity (for so it may be called, although, like many other properties which bear the name of vices in our constitution, it be, in truth, a beneficial principle acting according to a general law)—we are to supply it by a deeper sense of the obligations under which we lie; by a more frequent and a more distinct recollection of the reasons upon which that obligation is founded. We are not to wonder at the pains which this may cost us; still less are we to imitate the despondency of some serious Christians, who, in the impaired sensibility that habit hath induced, bewail the coldness of a deserted soul.

Hitherto our observation will not be questioned; but I think that this principle goes farther than is generally known or acknowledged. I think that it extends to the influence which argument itself possesses upon our understanding; or, at least, to the influence which it possesses in determining our will. I will not say, that, in a subject strictly intellectual, and in science properly so called, a demonstration is the less convincing for being old: but I am not sure that this is not, in some measure, true of moral evidence and probable proofs. In practical subjects, however, where two things are to be done, the understanding to be convinced, and the will to be persuaded, I believe that the force of every argument is diminished by triteness and familiarity. The intrinsic value of the argument must be the same; the impression may be very different.

But *we* have a disadvantage to contend with additional to this. The consequence of repetition will be felt more sensibly by us, who are in the habit of directing our arguments to others: for it always requires a second, a separate, and an unusual effort of the mind, to bring back the conclusion upon ourselves. In constructing, in expressing, in delivering our arguments; in all the thoughts and study which we employ upon them; what we are apt to hold continually in our view, is the effect which they may produce upon those who hear or read them. The further and best use of our meditations, their influence upon our own hearts and consciences, is lost in the presence of the other. In philosophy itself, it is not always the same thing, to study a subject, in order to understand, and in order only to teach it. In morals and religion, the powers of persuasion are cultivated by those whose employment is public instruction; but their wishes are fulfilled, and their care exhausted, in promoting the success of their endeavours upon others. The secret duty of turning truly and in earnest their attention upon themselves, is suspended, not to say forgotten, amidst the labours, the engagements, the popularity, of their public ministry; and in the best disposed minds, is interrupted, by the anxiety, or even by the satisfaction, with which their public services are performed.

These are dangers adhering to the very nature of our profession: but the evil is often also augmented by our imprudence. In our wishes to convince, we are extremely apt to *overstate* our arguments. We think no confidence with which we speak of them can be too great, when our intention is to urge them upon our hearers. This zeal, not seldom, I believe, defeats its own purpose, even with those whom we address; but it always destroys the efficacy of the argument upon ourselves. We are conscious of the exaggeration, whether our hearers perceive it or not; and this consciousness corrupts to us the whole influence of the conclusion; robs it even of its just value. Demonstration admits of no degrees: but real life knows nothing of demonstration. It converses only with moral evidence and moral reasoning. In these the scale of probability is extensive; and every argument hath its place in it. It may not be quite the same thing to overstate a true reason, and to advance a false one: but since two questions present themselves to the judgment, usually joined together by their nature and importance, *viz.* on which side probability lies, and how much it preponderates; to transgress the rules of fair reasoning in either question, in either to go beyond our own perception of the subject, is a similar, if not an equal fault. In both cases it is a want of candour, which approaches to a want of veracity. But that in which its worst effect is seen; that, at least, which it belongs to this discourse to notice; is in its so undermining the solidity of our proofs, that our own understandings refuse to rest upon them; in vitiating the integrity of our own judgments; in rendering our minds as well incapable of estimating the proper strength of moral and religious arguments, as unreasonably suspicious of their truth, and dull and insensible to their impression.

If dangers to our character accompany the exercise of our public ministry, they no less attend upon the nature of our professional studies. It has been said, that literary trifling upon the Scrip-

tures has a tendency, above all other employments, to harden the heart. If by this maxim it be designed to reprove the exercise, to check the freedom, or to question the utility, of critical researches, when employed upon the sacred volume, it is not by me to be defended. If it mean simply to guard against an existing danger, to state a usual and natural consequence, the maxim wants neither truth nor use. It is founded in this observation: when any one, by the command of learning and talents, has been fortunate enough to clear up an obscurity, or to settle a doubt, in the interpretation of Scripture; pleased (and justly pleased) with the result of his endeavours, his thoughts are wont to indulge this complacency, and there to stop; or when another, by a patient application of inferior faculties, has made, as he thinks, some progress in theological studies; or even has with much attention engaged in them; he is apt to rest and stay in what he deems a religious and meritorious service. The critic and the commentator do not always proceed with the reflection, that if these things be true, if this book do indeed convey to us the will of God, then is it no longer to be studied and criticised alone, but, what is a very different work, to be obeyed, and to be acted upon. At least, this ulterior operation of the mind, enfeebled perhaps by former exertions of quite another nature, does not always retain sufficient force and vigour to bend the obstinacy of the will. To describe the evil is to point out the remedy; which must consist in holding steadfastly within our view this momentous consideration, that, however laboriously, or however successfully, we may have cultivated religious studies; how much soever we may have added to our learning or our fame, we have hitherto done little for our salvation; that a more arduous, to us perhaps a new, and, it may be, a painful work, which the public eye sees not, which no public favour will reward, yet remains to be attempted; that of instituting an examination of our hearts and of our conduct, of altering the secret course of our behaviour, of reducing, with whatever violence to our habits, loss of our pleasures, or interruption of our pursuits, its deviations to a conformity with those rules of life which are delivered in the volume that lies open before us; and which, if it be of importance enough to deserve our study, ought, for reasons infinitely superior, to command our obedience.

Another disadvantage incidental to the character of which we are now exposing the dangers, is the moral debility that arises from the want of being trained in the virtues of active life. This complaint belongs not to the clergy as such, because their pastoral office affords as many calls, and as many opportunities, for beneficent exertions, as are usually found in private stations; but it belongs to that secluded, contemplative life, which men of learning often make choice of, or into which they are thrown by the accident of their fortunes. A great part of mankind owe their principles to their practice; that is, to that wonderful accession of strength and energy which good dispositions receive from good actions. It is difficult to sustain virtue by meditation alone; but let our conclusions only have influence enough once to determine us upon a course of virtue, and that influence will acquire such augmentation of force from every instance of virtuous endeavour, as, ere long, to produce in us constancy and resolution, a formed and a fixed character. Of this great and progressive assistance to their principles, men who are withdrawn from the business and the intercourse of civil life find themselves in some measure deprived. Virtue in them is left, more than in others, to the dictates of reason; to a sense of duty less aided by the power of habit. I will not deny that this difference renders their virtue more pure, more actual, and nearer to its principle; but it renders it less easy to be attained or preserved.

Having proposed these circumstances, as difficulties of which I think it useful that our order should be apprised; and as growing out of the functions of the profession, its studies, or the situations in which it places us; I proceed, with the same view, to notice a turn and habit of thinking, which is, of late, become very general amongst the higher classes of the community, amongst all who occupy stations of authority, and in common with these two descriptions of men, amongst the clergy. That which I am about to animadvert upon, is, in its place, and to a certain degree, undoubtedly a fair and right consideration; but, in the extent to which it prevails, has a tendency to discharge from the hearts of mankind all religious principle whatever. What I mean, is the performing of our religious offices for the sake of *setting an example* to others; and the allowing of this motive so to take possession of the mind, as to substitute itself into the place of the proper ground and reason of the duty. I must be permitted to contend, that, whenever this is the case, it becomes not only a cold and extraneous, but a false and unreasonable, principle of action. A conduct propagated through the different ranks of society merely by this motive, is a chain without a support, a fabric without a foundation. The parts, indeed, depend upon one another, but there is nothing to bear up the whole. There must be some reason for every duty beside example, or there can be no sufficient reason for it at all. It is a perversion, therefore, of the regular order of our ideas, to suffer a consideration, which, whatever be its importance, is only secondary and consequential to another, to shut out that other from the thoughts. The effect of this in the offices of religion, is utterly to destroy their religious quality; to rob them of that which gives to them their life, their spirituality, their nature. They who would set an example to others of acts of worship and devotion, in truth perform none themselves. Idle or proud spectators of the scene, they vouchsafe their presence in our assemblies, for the edification, it seems, and benefit of others, but as if they had no sins of their own to deplore, no mercies to acknowledge, no pardon to entreat.

Shall the consideration, then, of example be prohibited and discarded from the thoughts? By no means: but let it attend upon, not supersede, the proper motive of the action. Let us learn to know and feel the reason, the value, and the obligation of the duty, as it concerns ourselves; and, in proportion as we are affected by the force of these considerations, we shall desire, and desiring endeavour, to extend their influence to others. This wish, flowing from an original sense of each duty, preserves to the duty its proper principle. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." *The glory of your heavenly Father* is still, you observe, the termination of the precept. The love of God; that zeal for his honour and service, which love, which gratitude,

which piety inspires, is still to be the operating motive of your conduct. Because we find it convenient to ourselves, that those about us should be religious; or because it is useful to the state, that religion should be upheld in the country: to join, from these motives, in the public ordinances of the church, for the sake of maintaining their credit by our presence and example, however advisable it may be as a branch of secular prudence, is not either to fulfil our Lord's precept, or to perform any religious service. Religion can spring only from its own principle. Believing our salvation to be involved in the faithful discharge of our religious as well as moral duties, or rather that they are the same; experiencing the warmth, the consolation, the virtuous energy, which every act of true devotion communicates to the heart, and how much these effects are heightened by consent and sympathy; with the benevolence with which we love our neighbour, loving also and seeking his immortal welfare; when, prompted by these sentiments, we unite with him in acts of social homage to our Maker, then hath every principle its weight; then, at length, is our worship what it ought to be; exemplary, yet our own; not the less personal for being public. We bring our hearts to the service, and not a constrained attendance upon the place, with oftentimes an ill concealed indifference to what is there passing.

If what we have stated concerning example be true; if the consideration of it be liable to be overstretched or misapplied; no persons can be more in danger of falling into the mistake than they who are taught to regard themselves as placed in their stations for the purpose of becoming the examples as well as instructors of their flocks. It is necessary that they should be admonished to revert continually to the fundamental cause of all obligation and of all duty; particularly to remember, that, in their religious offices, they have not only to pronounce, to excite, to conduct the devotion of their congregations, but to pay to God the adoration which themselves owe to him: in a word, amidst their care of others, to save their own souls by their own religion.

These, I think, are some of the causes, which, in the conduct of their lives, call for a peculiar attention from the clergy, and from men of learning; and which render the apostle's example, and the lesson which it teaches, peculiarly applicable to their circumstances. It remains only to remind them of a consideration which ought to counteract these disadvantages, by producing a care and solicitude, sufficient to meet every danger, and every difficulty; to remind them, I say, for they cannot need to be informed, of our Lord's solemn declaration, that contumacious knowledge, and neglected talents, knowledge which doth not lead to obedience, and talents which rest in useless speculations, will be found, in the day of final account, amongst the objects of his severest displeasure. Would to God, that men of learning always understood how deeply they are concerned in this warning! It is impossible to add another reason which can be equal or second to our Lord's admonition: but we may suggest a motive of very distant indeed, but of no mean importance, and to which they certainly will not refuse its due regard, the honour and estimation of learning itself. Irregular morals in men of distinguished attainments, render them, not despised, (for talents and learning never can be despicable,) but subjects of malicious remark, perhaps of affected pity, to the enemies of intellectual liberty, of science and literature; and, at the same time, of sincere though silent regret to those who are desirous of supporting the esteem which ought to await the successful pursuit of ingenuous studies. We entreat such men to reflect, that their conduct will be made the reply of idleness to industry, the revenge of dulness and ignorance upon parts and learning; to consider, how many will seek, and think they find, in their example, an apology for sloth, and for indifference to all liberal improvement; what a theme, lastly, they supply to those, who, to the discouragement of every mental exertion, preach up the vanity of human knowledge, and the danger or the mischief of superior attainments.

But if the reputation of learning be concerned in the conduct of those who devote themselves to its pursuit, the sacred interests of morality are not less so. It is for us to take care that we justify not the boasts, or the sneers, of infidelity; that we do not authorise the worst of all scepticism, that which would subvert the distinctions of moral good and evil, by insinuating concerning them, that their only support is prejudice, their only origin in the artifice of the wise, and the credulity of the multitude; and that these things are but too clearly confessed by the lives of men of learning and inquiry. This calumny let us contradict; let us refute. Let us show, that virtue and Christianity cast their deepest foundations in knowledge; that, however they may ask the aid of principles which, in a great degree, govern human life, (and which must necessarily, therefore, be either powerful allies, or irresistible adversaries, of education, of habit, of example, of public authority, of public institutions,) they rest, nevertheless, upon the firm basis of rational argument. Let us testify to the world our sense of this great truth, by the only evidence which the world will believe, the influence of our conclusions upon our own conduct.

SERMON VI.

ON OUR DUTY TO GOD AND MAN.

A SERMON, PREACHED AT THE ASSIZES, AT DURHAM, JULY 29, 1795; AND PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE LORD BISHOP, THE HONOURABLE THE JUDGES OF ASSIZE, AND THE GRAND JURY.

To the Honourable and Right Reverend Shute, by Divine Providence, Lord Bishop of Durham, the following Discourse, as a small but sincere expression of gratitude, for a great, unsolicited, and unexpected favour, is inscribed, by his faithful and most obliged servant, *W. PALEY.*

For none of us liveth to himself.—Rom. xiv. 7.

THE use of many of the precepts and maxims of Scripture, is not so much to prescribe actions, as to generate some certain turn and habit of thinking: and they are then only applied as they ought to be, when they furnish us with a view of, and such a way of considering, the subject to which they relate, as may rectify and meliorate our dispositions; for from dispositions, so rectified and meliorated, particular good actions, and particular good rules of acting, flow of their own accord. This is true of the great Christian maxims, of loving our neighbours as ourselves; of doing to others as we would that others should do to us; and (as will appear, I hope, in the sequel of this discourse) of that of the text. These maxims being well impressed, the detail of conduct may be left to itself. The subtleties of casuistry, I had almost said the science, may be spared. By presenting to the mind one fixed consideration, such a temper is at length formed within us, that our first impressions and first impulses are sure almost of being on the side of virtue; and that we feel likewise an almost irresistible inclination to be governed by them. When this disposition is perfected, the influence of religion, as a moral institution, is sufficiently established.

It is not in this way, but in another, that human laws, especially the laws of free countries, proceed to attain their objects. Forasmuch as their ultimate sanctions are to be dispensed by fallible men, instead of an unerring and omniscient Judge, the safety, as well as the liberty, of the subject, requires, that discretion should be bound down by precise rules both of acting, and of judging of actions.—Hence lawgivers have been obliged to multiply directions and prohibitions without number: and this necessity, for such I acknowledge it to be, hath drawn them into a prolixity, which encumbers the law as a science to those who study or administer it; and sometimes perplexes it, as a rule of conduct, to those who have nothing to do with it, but to obey it. Yet still they find themselves unable to make laws as fast as occasions demand them: they find themselves perpetually called upon to pursue, by fresh paths, the inventive versatility of human fraud, or to provide for new and unforeseen varieties of situation. Now should religion, which professes to guide the whole train and range of a man's conduct, interior as well as external, domestic as well as civil; and which, consequently, extends the operations of its rules to many things which the laws leave indifferent and uncontrolled; should religion, I say, once set about to imitate the precision of human laws, the volume of its precepts would soon be rendered useless by its bulk, and unintelligible by its intricacy. The religion of Mahomet, as might be expected from the religion of a military prophet, constituted itself into the law of the states into which it was received. Assuming the functions of legislators and magistrates, in conjunction with the character of interpreters of the Koran, and depositaries of the supplemental laws of the religion, the successors of the Arabian have, under the name of traditionary rules, compiled a code for the direction of their followers in almost every part of their conduct. The *seventy-five thousand* precepts of that code* serve only to show the futility of the attempt; to prove by experiment that religion can only act upon human life by general precepts, addressed and applied to the disposition; that there is no ground for the objection that has sometimes been made to Christianity, that it is defective, as a moral institution, for the want of more explicit, more circumstantial, and more accurate directions; and that when we place by the side of each other human and divine laws, without understanding the distinction in the two methods by which they seek to attain their purpose, and the reason of that distinction, we form a comparison between them, which is likely to be injurious to both. We may find fault

* See Hamilton's translation of the Hedaya or Guide.

with the Scriptures, for not giving us the precision of civil laws; and we may blame the laws, for not being content with the conciseness and simplicity of Scripture; and our censure in both cases be unfounded and undeserved.

The observation of the text is exactly of the nature I have been alluding to. It supplies a principle. It furnishes us with a view of our duty, and of the relations in which we are placed, which, if attended to, (and no instruction can be of use without that,) will produce in our minds just determinations, and, what are of more value, because more wanted, efficacious motives.

"None of us liveth to himself." We ought to regard our lives, (including under that name our faculties, our opportunities, our advantages of every kind,) not as mere instruments of personal gratification, but as due to the service of God; and as given us to be employed in promoting the purpose of his will in the happiness of our fellow-creatures. I am not able to imagine a turn of thought which is better than this. It encounters the antagonist, the check, the destroyer of all virtue, selfishness. It is intelligible to all; to all different degrees applicable. It incessantly prompts to exertion, to activity, to beneficence.

In order to recommend it, and in order to render it as useful as it is capable of being made, it may be proper to point out, how the force and truth of the apostle's assertion bears upon the different classes of civil society. And in this view, the description of men which first, undoubtedly, offers itself to our notice, is that of men of public characters; who possess offices of importance, power, influence, and authority. If the rule and principle which I am exhibiting to your observation, can be said to be made for one class of mankind more than another, it is for them. *They*, certainly, "live not to themselves." The design, the tenure, the condition of their offices; the public expectation, the public claim; consign their lives and labours, their cares, and thoughts, and talents, to the public happiness, whereinsoever it is connected with the duties of their stations, or can be advanced by the fidelity of their services. There may be occasions and emergencies when men are called upon to take part in the public service, out of the line of their professions, or the ordinary limits of their vocation. But these emergencies occur, I think, seldom. The necessity should be manifest, before we yield to it. A too great readiness to start out of our separate precincts of duty, in order to rush into provinces which belong to others, is a dangerous excess of zeal. In general the public interest is best upheld, the public quiet always best preserved, by each one attending closely to the proper and distinct duties of his station. In seasons of peril or consternation, this attention ought to be doubled. Dangers are not best opposed by tumultuous or disorderly exertions; but by a sedate, firm, and calm resistance, especially by that regular and silent strength, which is the collected result of each man's vigilance and industry in his separate station. For public men, therefore, to be active in the stations assigned to them, is demanded by their country in the hour of her fear or danger. If ever there was a time, when they that rule "should rule with diligence;" when supineness, negligence, and remissness in office, when a timidity or love of ease, which might in other circumstances be tolerated, ought to be proscribed and excluded, it is the present. If ever there was a time to make the public feel the benefit of public institutions, it is this.

But I shall add nothing more concerning the obligation which the text, and the lesson it conveys, imposes upon public men, because I think that the principle is too apt to be considered as appertaining to them alone. It will therefore be more useful to show, how what are called private stations are affected by the same principle. I say, what are called private stations; for such they are, only as contradistinguished from public trusts publicly and formally confided. In themselves, and accurately estimated, there are few such; I mean, that there are few so destined to the private emolument of the possessor, as that they are innocently occupied by him, when they are occupied with no other attention but to his own enjoyment. Civil government is constituted for the happiness of the governed, and not for the gratification of those who administer it. Not only so, but the gradations of rank in society are supported, not for the advantage or pleasure of those who possess the highest places in it, but for the common good; for the security, the repose, the protection, the encouragement, of all. They may be very satisfactorily defended upon this principle; but then this principle casts upon them duties. In particular, it teaches every man who possesses a fortune, to regard himself as in some measure occupying a public station; as obliged to make it a channel of beneficence, an instrument of good to others, and not merely a supply to himself of the materials of luxury, ostentation, or avarice. There is a share of power and influence necessarily attendant upon property; upon the right or the wrong use of which, the exertion or the neglect, depends no little part of the virtue or vice, the happiness or misery, of the community. It is in the choice of every man of rank and property to become the benefactor or the scourge, the guardian or the tyrant, the example or the corrupter, of the virtue of his servants, his tenants, his neighbourhood; to be the author to them of peace or contention, of sobriety or dissoluteness, of comfort or distress. This power, whencesoever it proceeds, whether expressly conferred or silently acquired, (for I see no difference in the two cases,) brings along with it obligation and responsibility. It is to be lamented when this consideration is not known, or not attended to. Two causes appear to me to obstruct, to men of this description, the view of their moral situation. One is, that they do not perceive any *call* upon them at all; the other, that, if there be one, they do not see to what they are called. To the first point I would answer in the words of an excellent moralist,* "The delivery of the talent is the call;" it is the call of Providence, the call of Heaven. The supply of the means is the requisition of the duty. When we find ourselves in possession of faculties and opportunities, whether arising from the endowments and qualities of our minds, or from the advantages of fortune and station, we need ask for no further evidence of the intention of the donor: we ought to see in that intention a demand upon us for the use and application of what has been given. This is a principle of natural as

* The late Abraham Tucker, Esq. author of The Light of Nature, and of The Light of Nature and Revelation pursued, by Edward Search, Esq.

well as revealed religion: and it is universal. Then as to the second inquiry, the species of benevolence, the kind of duty to which we are bound, it is pointed out to us by the same indication. To whatever office of benevolence our faculties are best fitted, our talents turned; whatever our opportunities, our occasions, our fortune, our profession, our rank or station, or whatever our local circumstances, which are capable of no enumeration, put in our power to perform with the most advantage and effect, that is the office for us; that it is, which, upon our principle, we are designed, and, being designed, are obliged to discharge. I think that the judgment of mankind does not often fail them in the choice of the objects or species of their benevolence: but what fails them is the sense of the obligation, the consciousness of the connexion between duty and power, and springing from this consciousness, a disposition to seek opportunities, or to embrace those that occur, of rendering themselves useful to their generation.

Another cause, which keeps out of the sight of those who are concerned in them, the duties that belong to superior stations, is a language from their infancy familiar to them, namely, that they are placed above work. I have always considered this as a most unfortunate phraseology. And, as habitual modes of speech have no small effect upon public sentiment, it has a direct tendency to make one portion of mankind envious, and the other idle. The truth is, every man has his work. The kind of work varies, and that is all the difference there is. A great deal of labour exists beside that of the hands; many species of industry beside bodily operation, equally necessary, requiring equal assiduity, more attention, more anxiety. It is not true, therefore, that men of elevated stations are exempted from work; it is only true, that there is assigned to them work of a different kind: whether more easy, or more pleasant, may be questioned; but certainly not less wanted, not less essential to the common good. Were this maxim once properly received as a principle of conduct, it would put men of fortune and rank upon inquiring, what were the opportunities of doing good, (for some, they may depend upon it, there are,) which in a more especial manner belonged to their situation or condition; and were this principle carried into any thing like its full effect, or even were this way of thinking sufficiently inculcated, it would completely remove the invidiousness of elevated stations. Mankind would see in them this alternative: If such men discharged the duties which were attached to the advantages they enjoyed, they deserved these advantages: if they did not, they were, morally speaking, in the situation of a poor man who neglected his business and his calling; and in no better. And the proper reflection in both cases is the same: the individual is in a high degree culpable, yet the business and the calling beneficial and expedient.

The habit and the disposition which we wish to recommend, namely, that of casting about for opportunities of doing good, readily seizing those which accidentally present themselves, and faithfully using those which naturally and regularly belong to our situations, appear to be sometimes checked by a notion, very natural to active spirits, and to flattered talents. They will not be content to do little things. They will either attempt mighty matters, or do nothing. The small effect which the private endeavours of an individual can produce upon the mass of social good, is so lost, and so unperceived, in the comparison, that it neither deserves, they think, nor rewards, the attention which it requires. The answer is, that the comparison, which thus discourages them, ought never to be made. The good which their efforts can produce, may be too minute to bear any sensible proportion to the sum of public happiness, yet may be their share, may be enough for them. The proper question is not, whether the good we aim at be great or little; still less, whether it be great or little in comparison with the whole; but whether it be the most which it is in our power to perform. A single action may be, as it were, nothing to the aggregate of moral good; so also may be the agent. It may still, therefore, be the proportion which is required of *him*. In all things nature works by numbers. Her greatest effects are achieved by the joint operation of multitudes of (separately considered) insignificant individuals. It is enough for each that it executes its office. It is not its concern, because it does not depend upon its will, what place that office holds in, or what proportion it bears to, the general result. Let our only comparison therefore be, between our opportunities and the use which we make of them. When we would extend our views, or stretch out our hand, to distant and general good, we are commonly lost and sunk in the magnitude of the subject. Particular good, and the particular good which lies within our reach, is all we are concerned to attempt, or to inquire about. Not the smallest effort will be forgotten; not a particle of our virtue will fall to the ground. Whether successful or not, our endeavours will be recorded; will be estimated, not according to the proportion which they bear to the universal interest, but according to the relation which they hold to our means and opportunities; according to the disinterestedness, the sincerity, with which we undertook, the pains and perseverance with which we carried them on. It may be true, and I think it is the doctrine of Scripture, that the right use of great faculties or great opportunities will be more highly rewarded, than the right use of inferior faculties and less opportunities. He that with ten talents had made ten talents more, was placed over ten cities. The neglected talent was also given to him. He who with five talents had made five more, though pronounced to be a good and faithful servant, was placed only over five cities.* This distinction might, without any great harshness to our moral feelings, be resolved into the will of the Supreme Benefactor: but we can see, perhaps, enough of the subject to perceive that it was just. The merit may reasonably be supposed to have been more in one case than the other. The danger, the activity, the care, the solicitude, were greater. Still both received rewards, abundant beyond measure when compared with the services, equitable and proportioned when compared with one another.

That our obligation is commensurate with our opportunity, and that the possession of the opportunity is sufficient, without any further or more formal command, to create the obligation, is a principle of morality and of Scripture; and is alike true in all countries. But that power and property so far go together, as to constitute private fortunes

* Matt. xxv. 20, *et seq.*

into public stations, as to cast upon large portions of the community occasions which render the preceding principles more constantly applicable, is the effect of civil institutions, and is found in no country more than in ours; if in any so much. With us a great part of the public business of the country is transacted by the country itself: and upon the prudent and faithful management of it, depends, in a very considerable degree, the interior prosperity of the nation, and the satisfaction of great bodies of the people. Not only offices of magistracy, which affect and pervade every district, are delegated to the principal inhabitants of the neighbourhood, but there is erected in every county a high and venerable tribunal, to which owners of permanent property, down almost to their lowest classes, are indiscriminately called; and called to take part, not in the forms and ceremonies of the meeting, but in the most efficient and important of its functions. The wisdom of man hath not devised a happier institution than that of juries, or one founded in a juster knowledge of human life, or of the human capacity. In jurisprudence, as in every science, the points ultimately rest upon common sense. But to reduce a question to these points, and to propose them accurately, requires not only an understanding superior to that which is necessary to decide upon them when proposed, but oftentimes also a technical and peculiar erudition. Agreeably to this distinction, which runs perhaps through all sciences, what is preliminary and preparatory is left to the legal profession; what is final, to the plain understanding of plain men. But since it is necessary that the judgment of such men should be informed; and since it is of the utmost importance that advice which falls with so much weight, should be drawn from the purest sources; judges are sent down to us, who have spent their lives in the study and administration of the laws of their country, and who come amongst us, strangers to our contentions, if we have any, our parties, and our prejudices; strangers to every thing except the evidence which they hear. The effect corresponds with the wisdom of the design. Juries may err, and frequently do so; but there is no system of error incorporated with their constitution. Corruption, terror, influence are excluded by it; and prejudice, in a great degree, though not entirely. This danger, which consists in juries viewing one class of men, or one class of rights, in a more or less favourable light than another, is the only one to be feared, and to be guarded against. It is a disposition, which, whenever it rises up in the minds of jurors, ought to be repressed by their probity, their consciences, the sense of their duty, the remembrance of their oaths.

And this institution is not more salutary, than it is grateful and honourable to those popular feelings of which all good governments are tender. Hear the language of the law. In the most momentous interests, in the last peril indeed of human life, the accused appeals to God and his country, "which country you are." What pomp of titles, what display of honours, can equal the real dignity which these few words confer upon those to whom they are addressed? They show, by terms the most solemn and significant, how highly the law deems of the functions and character of a jury; they show also, with what care of the safety of the subject it is, that the same law has provided for every one a recourse to the fair and indifferent arbitration of his neighbours. This is substantial equality; real freedom: equality of protection; freedom from injustice. May it never be invaded, never abused! May it be perpetual! And it will be so, if the affection of the country continue to be preserved to it, by the integrity of those who are charged with its office.

SERMONS ON SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Author of these Sermons, by a codicil to his will, declares as follows:—"If my life had been continued, it was my intention to have printed at Sunderland a Volume of Sermons—about 500 copies; to be distributed gratis in the parish; and I had proceeded so far in the design as to have transcribed several Sermons for that purpose, which are in a parcel by themselves. There is also a parcel from which I intended to make other transcripts; but the business is in an imperfect unfinished state; the arrangement is not settled further than that I thought the Sermon on Seriousness in Religion should come first, and then the doctrinal Sermons: there are also many repetitions in them, and some that might be omitted or consolidated with others." The codicil then goes on to direct, that, after such disposition should have been made respecting the Manuscripts as might be deemed necessary, they should be printed by the Rev. Mr. Stephenson, at the expense of the testator's executors, and distributed in the neighbourhood, first to those who frequented church, then to farmers' families in the country, then to such as had a person in the family who could read, and were likely to read them: and, finally, it is added, "I would not have the said Sermons published for sale."

In compliance with this direction, the following Sermons were selected, printed, and distributed by the Rev. Mr. Stephenson, in and about the parish of Bishop Wearmouth, in the year 1806.

These Discourses were not originally composed for publication, but were written for, and, as appears by the Manuscripts, had most of them been preached at the parish Churches of which, in different parts of the Author's life, he had the care. It was undoubtedly the Author's intention that they should not be published, but the circulation of such a number as he had directed by his will to be distributed, rendered it impossible to adhere to that intention; and it was found necessary to publish them, as the only means of preventing a surreptitious sale.

SERMON I.

SERIOUSNESS IN RELIGION INDISPENSABLE ABOVE ALL OTHER DISPOSITIONS.

——*Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*—1 Pet. iv. 7

The first requisite in religion is seriousness. No impression can be made without it. An orderly life, so far as others are able to observe us, is now and then produced by prudential motives, or by dint of habit; but without seriousness, there can be no religious principle at the bottom, no course of conduct flowing from religious motives: in a word, there can be no religion. This cannot exist without seriousness upon the subject. Perhaps a teacher of religion has more difficulty in producing seriousness amongst his hearers, than in any other part of his office. Until he succeed in this, he loses his labour: and when once, from any cause whatever, a spirit of levity has taken hold of a mind, it is next to impossible to plant serious considerations in that mind. It is seldom to be done, except by some great shock or alarm, sufficient to make a radical change in the disposition: and which is God's own way of bringing about the business.

One might have expected that events so awful and tremendous, as death and judgment; that a question so deeply interesting, as whether we shall go to heaven or to hell, could in no possible case, and in no constitution of mind whatever, fail of exciting the most serious apprehension and concern. But this is not so. In a thoughtless, a careless, a sensual world, many are always found who can resist, and who do resist, the force and importance of all these reflections, that is to say, they suffer nothing of the kind to enter into their thoughts. There are grown men and women, nay, even middle aged persons, who have not thought seriously about religion an hour, nor a quarter of an hour, in the whole course of their lives. This great object of human solicitude affects not them in any manner whatever.

It cannot be without its use to inquire into the causes of a levity of temper, which so effectually obstructs the admission of every religious

influence, and which I should almost call unnatural.

Now there is a numerous class of mankind, who are wrought upon by nothing but what applies immediately to their senses; by what they see, or by what they feel; by pleasures or pains, or by the near prospect of pleasures and pains which they actually experience or actually observe. But it is the characteristic of religion to hold out to our consideration consequences which we do not perceive at the time. That is its very office and province. Therefore if men will restrict and confine all their regards and all their cares to things which they perceive with their outward senses; if they will yield up their understandings to their senses, both in what these senses are fitted to apprehend, and in what they are not fitted to apprehend, it is utterly impossible for religion to settle in their hearts, or for them to entertain any serious concern about the matter. But surely this conduct is completely irrational, and can lead to nothing but ruin. It proceeds upon the supposition, that there is nothing above us, about us, or future, by which we can be affected, but the things which we see with our eyes or feel by our touch. All which is untrue. "The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are seen; even his eternal Power and Godhead;" which means, that the order, contrivance, and design, displayed in the creation, prove with certainty, that there is more in nature than what we really see; and that amongst the invisible things of the universe, there is a Being, the author and original of all this contrivance and design, and, by consequence, a being of stupendous power, and of wisdom and knowledge incomparably exalted above any wisdom or knowledge which we see in man; and that he stands in the same relation to us as the maker does to the thing made. The things which are seen are not made of the things which do appear. This is plain: and this argument is independent of Scripture and Revelation. What further moral or religious consequences properly follow from it, is another question; but the proposition itself shows, that they who cannot, and they who will not, raise their minds above the mere information of their senses, are in a state of gross error as to the real truth of things, and are also in a state to which the faculties of man ought not to be degraded. A person of this sort may, with respect to religion, remain a child all his life. A child naturally has no concern but about the things which directly meet its senses; and the person we describe is in the same condition.

Again: there is a race of giddy thoughtless men and women, of young men and young women more especially, who look no further than the next day, the next week, the next month; seldom or ever so far as the next year. Present pleasure is every thing with them.—The sports of the day, the amusements of the evening, entertainments and diversions, occupy all their concern; and so long as these can be supplied in succession, so long as they can go from one diversion to another, their minds remain in a state of perfect indifference to every thing except their pleasures. Now what chance has religion with such dispositions as these? Yet these dispositions, begun in early life, and favoured by circumstances, that is, by affluence and health, cleave to a man's character much beyond the period of life in which they might seem to be excusable. Excusable did I say? I ought rather to have said that they are contrary to reason and duty, in every condition and at every period of life. Even in youth they are built upon falsehood and folly. Young persons as well as old, find that things do actually come to pass. Evils and mischiefs, which they regarded as distant, as out of their view, as beyond the line and reach of their preparations or their concern, come, they find, to be actually felt. They find that nothing is done by slighting them beforehand; for, however neglected or despised, perhaps ridiculed and derided, they come not only to be things present, but the very things, and the only things, about which their anxiety is employed; become serious things indeed, as being the things which now make them wretched and miserable. Therefore a man must learn to be affected by events which appear to lie at some distance, before he will be seriously affected by religion.

Again: the general course of education is much against religious seriousness, even without those who conduct education foreseeing or intending any such effect. Many of us, are brought up with this world set before us, and nothing else. Whatever promotes this world's prosperity is praised; whatever hurts and obstructs and prejudices this world's prosperity is blamed: and there all praise and censure end. We see mankind about us in motion and action, but all these motions and actions directed to worldly objects. We hear their conversation, but it is all the same way. And this is what we see and hear from the first. The views which are continually placed before our eyes, regard this life alone and its interests. Can it then be wondered at that an early worldly-mindedness is bred in our hearts, so strong as to shut out heavenly-mindedness entirely? In the contest which is always carrying on between this world and the next, it is no difficult thing to see what advantage this world has. One of the greatest of these advantages is, that it pre-occupies the mind: it gets the first hold and the first possession. Childhood and youth, left to themselves, are necessarily guided by sense; and sense is all on the side of this world. Meditation brings us to look towards a future life; but then meditation comes afterwards: it only comes when the mind is already filled and engaged and occupied, nay, often crowded and surcharged with worldly ideas. It is not only, therefore, fair and right, but it is absolutely necessary, to give to religion all the advantage we can give it by dint of education; for all that can be done is too little to set religion upon an equality with its rival; which rival is the world. A creature which is to pass a small portion of its existence in one state, and that state to be preparatory to another, ought, no doubt, to have its attention constantly fixed upon its ulterior and permanent destination. And this would be so, if the question between them came fairly before the mind. We should listen to the Scriptures, we should embrace religion, we should enter into every thing which had relation to the subject, with a concern and impression, even far more than the pursuits of this world, eager and ardent as they are, excite. But the question between religion and the world does not come fairly before us. What surrounds us is this world; what addresses our senses and our passions is this world; what is at hand, what is in contact with us, what acts upon us, what we act upon, is this world.

Reason, faith, and hope, are the only principles to which religion applies, or possibly can apply: and it is reason, faith, and hope, striving with sense, striving with temptation, striving for things absent against things which are present. That religion, therefore, may not be quite excluded and overborne, may not quite sink under these powerful causes, every support ought to be given to it, which can be given by education, by instruction, and, above all, by the example of those, to whom young persons look up, acting with a view to a future life themselves.

Again: it is the nature of worldly business of all kinds, especially of much hurry or over-employment, or over-anxiety in business, to shut out and keep out religion from the mind. The question is, whether the state of mind which this cause produces, ought to be called a want of seriousness in religion. It becomes coldness and indifference towards religion; but is it properly a want of seriousness upon the subject? I think it is; and in this way. We are never serious upon any matter which we regard as trifling. This is impossible. And we are led to regard a thing as trifling, which engages no portion of our habitual thoughts, in comparison with what other things do.

But further: the world, even in its innocent pursuits and pleasures, has a tendency unfavourable to the religious sentiment. But were these all it had to contend with, the strong application which religion makes to the thoughts whenever we think of it at all, the strong interest which it presents to us, might enable it to overcome and prevail in the contest. But there is another adversary to oppose, much more formidable; and that is sensuality; an addiction to sensual pleasures. It is the flesh which lusteth against the Spirit; that is the war which is waged within us. So it is, no matter what may be the cause, that sensual indulgences, over and above their proper criminality, as sins, as offences against God's commands, have a specific effect upon the heart of man in destroying the religious principle within him; or still more surely in preventing the formation of that principle. It either induces an open profaneness of conversation and behaviour, which scorns and contemns religion; a kind of profligacy, which rejects and sets at nought the whole thing; or it brings upon the heart an averseness to the subject, a fixed dislike and reluctance to enter upon its concerns in any way whatever. That a resolved sinner should set himself against a religion which tolerates no sin, is not to be wondered at. He is against religion, because religion is against the course of life upon which he has entered, and which he does not feel himself willing to give up. But this is not the whole, nor is it the bottom of the matter. The effect we allude to is not so reasoning or argumentative as this. It is a specific effect upon the mind. The heart is rendered unsusceptible of religious impressions, incapable of a serious regard to religion. And this effect belongs to sins of sensuality more than to other sins. It is a consequence which almost universally follows from them.

We measure the importance of things, not by what, or according to what they are in truth, but by and according to the space and room which they occupy in our minds. Now our business, our trade, our schemes, our pursuits, our gains, our losses, our fortunes, possessing so much of our minds, whether we regard the hours we expend in meditating upon them, or the earnestness with which we think about them; and religion possessing so little share of our thought either in time or earnestness; the consequence is, that worldly interest comes to be the serious thing with us, religion comparatively the trifle. Men of business are naturally serious; but all their seriousness is absorbed by their business. In religion they are no more serious than the most giddy characters are; than those characters are, which betray levity in all things.

Again: the want of due seriousness in religion is almost sure to be the consequence of the absence or disuse of religious ordinances and exercises. I use two terms; *absence* and *disuse*. Some have never attended upon any religious ordinance, or practised any religious exercises, since the time they were born; some very few times in their lives. With these it is the *absence* of religious ordinances and exercises. There are others, (and many we fear of this description,) who whilst under the guidance of their parents, have frequented religious ordinances, and been trained up to religious exercises, but who, when they came into more public life, and to be their own masters, and to mix in the pleasures of the world, or engage themselves in its business and pursuits, have forsaken these duties in whole or in a great degree. With these it is the *disuse* of religious ordinances and exercises. But I must also explain what I mean by *religious ordinances* and *exercises*. By *religious ordinances*, I mean the being instructed in our catechism in our youth; attending upon public worship at church; the keeping holy the Lord's day regularly and most particularly, together with a few other days in the year, by which some very principal events and passages of the Christian history are commemorated; and, at its proper season, the more solemn office of receiving the Lord's Supper. These are so many rites and ordinances of Christianity; concerning all which it may be said, that with the greatest part of mankind, especially of that class of mankind which must, or does, give much of its time and care to worldly concerns, they are little less than absolutely necessary; if we judge it to be necessary to maintain and uphold any sentiment, any impression, any seriousness about religion in the mind at all. They are necessary to preserve in the thoughts a *place* for the subject; they are necessary that the train of our thoughts may not even be closed up against it. Were all days of the week alike, and employed alike; was there no difference or distinction between Sunday and work-day; was there not a church in the nation: were we never, from one year's end to another, called together to participate in public worship; were there no set forms of public worship: no particular persons appointed to minister and officiate, indeed no assemblies for public worship at all; no joint prayers; no preaching; still religion, in itself, in its reality and importance, in its end and event, would be the same thing as what it is: we should still have to account for our conduct; there would still be heaven and hell; salvation and perdition; there would still be the laws of God, both natural and revealed; all the obligation which the authority of a Creator can impose upon a creature; all the gratitude which is due from a rational being to the Author and Giver of

every blessing which he enjoys; lastly, there would still be the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ. All these things would, with or without religious ordinances, be equally real, and existing, and valid: but men would not think equally about them. Many would entirely and totally neglect them. Some there would always be of a more devout, or serious, or contemplative disposition, who would retain a lively sense of these things under all circumstances and all disadvantages, who would never lose their veneration for them, never forget them. But from others, from the careless, the busy, the followers of pleasure, the pursuers of wealth or advancement, these things would slip away from the thoughts entirely.

Together with *religious ordinances* we mentioned *religious exercises*. By the term *religious exercises*, I in particular mean private prayer; whether it be at set times, as in the morning and evening of each day; or whether it be called forth by occasions, as when we are to form some momentous decision, or enter upon some great undertaking; or when we are under some pressing difficulty or deep distress, some excruciating bodily pain or heavy affliction; or, on the other hand, and no less properly, when we have lately been receiving some signal benefit, experiencing some signal mercy; such as preservation from danger, relief from difficulty or distress, abatement of pain, recovery from sickness: for by prayer, let it be observed, we mean devotion in general; and thanksgiving is devotion as much as prayer itself. I mean private prayer, as here described; and I also mean, what is perhaps the most natural form of private prayer, short ejaculatory extemporaneous addresses to God, as often as either the reflections which rise up in our minds, let them come from what quarter they may, or the objects and incidents which seize our attention, prompt us to utter them; which in a religiously disposed mind, will be the case, I may say, every hour, and which ejaculation may be offered up to God in any posture, in any place, or in any situation. Amongst religious exercises, I also reckon family prayer, which unites many of the uses both of public worship and private prayer. The reading of religious books is likewise to be accounted a religious exercise. Religious meditation still more so; and more so for this reason, that it implies and includes that most important duty, self-examination; for I hold it to be next to impossible for a man to meditate upon religion, without meditating at the same time upon his own present condition with respect to the tremendous alternative which is to take place upon him after his death.

These are what we understand by religious exercises; and they are all so far of the same nature with religious ordinances, that they are aids and helps of religion itself; and I think that religious seriousness cannot be maintained in the soul without them.

But again: a cause which has a strong tendency to destroy religious seriousness, and which almost infallibly prevents its formation and growth in young minds, is levity in conversation upon religious subjects, or upon subjects connected with religion. Whether we regard the practice with respect to those who use it, or to those who hear it, it is highly to be blamed, and is productive of great mischief. In those who use it, it amounts almost to a proof that they are destitute of religious seriousness. The principle itself is destroyed in them, or was never formed in them. Upon those who hear, its effect is this: If they have concern about religion, and the disposition towards religion which they ought to have, and which we signify by this word *seriousness*, they will be inwardly shocked and offended by the levity with which they hear it treated. They will, as it were, resent such treatment of a subject, which by them has always been thought upon with awe, and dread, and veneration. But the pain with which they were at first affected, goes off by hearing frequently the same sort of language; and then they will be almost sure, if they examine the state of their minds as to religion, to feel a change, in themselves for the worse. This is the danger to which those are exposed, who had before imbibed serious impressions. Those who had not, will be prevented, by such sort of conversation, from ever imbibing them at all; so that its influence is in all cases pernicious.

The turn which this levity usually takes, is in jests and raillery upon the opinions, or the peculiarities, or the persons of men of particular sects, or who bear particular names; especially if they happen to be more serious than ourselves. And of late this loose, and I can hardly help calling it profane humour, has been directed chiefly against the followers of methodism. But against whomsoever it happens to be pointed, it has all the bad effects both upon the speaker and the hearer which we have noticed: and as in other instances, so in this, give me leave to say that it is very much misplaced. In the first place, were the doctrines and sentiments of those who bear this name ever so foolish and extravagant, (I do not say that they are either,) this proposition I shall always maintain to be true, *viz.* that the wildest opinion that ever was entertained in matters of religion, is more rational than unconcern about these matters. Upon this subject nothing is so absurd as indifference; no folly so contemptible as thoughtlessness and levity. In the next place, do methodists deserve this treatment? Be their particular doctrines what they may, the professors of these doctrines appear to be in earnest about them; and a man who is in earnest in religion cannot be a bad man, still less a fit subject for derision. I am no methodist myself. In their leading doctrines I differ from them. But I contend that sincere men are not, for these, or indeed, any doctrines, to be made laughing stocks to others. I do not bring in the case of methodists in this part of my discourse, for the purpose of vindicating their tenets, but for the purpose of observing (and I wish that the observation may weigh with all my readers) that the custom of treating their characters and persons, their preaching or their preachers, their meetings or worship, with scorn, has the pernicious consequence of destroying our own seriousness, together with the seriousness of those who hear or join in such sort of conversation; especially if they be young persons: and I am persuaded that much mischief is actually done in this very way.

A phrase much used upon these occasions, and frequent in the mouth of those who speak of such as in religious matters are more serious than themselves, is, "that they are righteous over-much." These, it is true, are scripture words; and it is that circumstance which has given currency to the expression: but in the way and sense in which they are used, I am convinced that they are exceedingly

misapplied. The text occurs once in the Bible, and only once. It is in the book of Ecclesiastes, 7th chap. and 16th verse. It is not very easy to determine what is meant by it in the place in which it is found. It is a very obscure passage. It seems to me most probable, that it relates to an external affectation of righteousness, not prompted by internal principle: or rather to the assuming the character of righteousness, merely to vaunt or show our superiority over others; to conceitedness in religion: in like manner as the caution delivered in the same verse, "be not over-wise," respects the ostentation of wisdom, and not the attainment itself. So long as we mean by righteousness, a sincere and anxious desire to seek out the will of God, and to perform it, it is impossible to be righteous over-much. There is no such thing in nature: nor was it, nor could it be, the intention of any passage in the Bible, to say that there is, or to authorise us in casting over-righteousness as a reproach or a censure upon any one.

In like manner it has been objected, that so much regard, or, as the objectors would call it, over-regard for religion, is inconsistent with the interest and welfare of our families, and with success and prosperity in our worldly affairs. I believe that there is very little ground for this objection in fact, and even as the world goes; in reason and principle there is none. A good Christian divides his time between the duties of religion, the calls of business, and those quiet relaxations which may be innocently allowed to his circumstances and condition, and which will be chiefly in his family or amongst a few friends. In this plan of life there is no confusion or interference of its parts; and unless a man be given to sloth and laziness, which are what religion condemns, he will find time enough for them all. This calm system may not be sufficient for that unceasing eagerness, hurry, and anxiety about worldly affairs, in which some men pass their lives; but it is sufficient for every thing which reasonable prudence requires; and it is perfectly consistent with usefulness in our stations, which is a main point. Indeed, compare the hours which serious persons spend in religious exercises and meditations, with the hours which the thoughtless and irreligious spend in idleness and vice and expensive diversions, and you will perceive on which side of the comparison the advantage lies, even in this view of the subject.

Nor is there any thing in the nature of religion to support the objection. In a certain sense it is true, what has been sometimes said, that religion ought to be the rule of life, not the business; by which is meant, that the subject matter even of religious duties lies in the common affairs and transactions of the world. Diligence in our calling is an example of this; which, however, keeps both a man's head and hands at work upon business merely temporal; yet religion may be governing him here meanwhile. God may be feared in the busiest scenes.

In addition to the above, there exists another prejudice against religious seriousness, arising from a notion very commonly entertained, *viz.* that religion leads to gloom and melancholy. This notion, I am convinced, is a mistake. Some persons are constitutionally subject to melancholy, which is as much a disease in them, as the ague is a disease; and it may happen that such men's melancholy shall fall upon religious ideas, as it may upon any other subject which seizes their distempered imagination. But this is not religion leading to melancholy. Or it sometimes is the case that men are brought to a sense of religion by calamity and affliction, which produce, at the same time, depression of spirits. But neither here is religion the cause of this distress or dejection, or to be blamed for it. These cases being excepted, the very reverse of what is alleged against religion is the truth. No man's spirits were ever hurt by doing his duty. On the contrary, one good action, one temptation resisted and overcome, one sacrifice of desire or interest purely for conscience' sake, will prove a cordial for weak and low spirits beyond what either indulgence or diversion or company can do for them. And a succession and course of such actions and self-denials, springing from a religious principle and manfully maintained, is the best possible course that can be followed as a remedy for sinkings and oppressions of this kind. Can it then be true, that religion leads to melancholy? Occasions arise to every man living; to many very severe, as well as repeated occasions, in which the hopes of religion are the only stay that is left him. Godly men have that within them which cheers and comforts them in their saddest hours: ungodly men have that which strikes their heart, like a dagger, in its gayest moments. Godly men discover, what is very true, but what, by most men, is found out too late, namely, that a good conscience, and the hope of our Creator's final favour and acceptance, are the only solid happiness to be attained in this world. Experience corresponds with the reason of the thing. I take upon me to say, that religious men are generally cheerful. If this be not observed, as might be expected, supposing it to be true, it is because the cheerfulness which religion inspires does not show itself in noise or in fits and starts of merriment, but is calm and constant. Of this the only true and valuable kind of cheerfulness, for all other kinds are hollow and unsatisfying, religious men possess not less but a greater share than others.

Another destroyer of religious seriousness, and which is the last I shall mention, is a certain fatal turn which some minds take, namely, that when they find difficulties in or concerning religion, or any of the tenets of religion, they forthwith plunge into irreligion; and make these difficulties, or any degree of uncertainty which seems to their apprehension to hang over the subject, a ground and occasion for giving full liberty to their inclinations, and for casting off the restraints of religion entirely. This is the case with men, who, at the best, perhaps, were only balancing between the sanctions of religion and the love of pleasure or of unjust gain, but especially the former. In this precarious state, any objection, or appearance of objection, which diminishes the force of the religious impression, determines the balance against the side of virtue, and gives up the doubter to sensuality, to the world, and to the flesh. Now, of all ways which a man can take, this is the surest way to destruction; and it is completely irrational. I say it is completely irrational; for when we meditate upon the tremendous consequences which form the subject of religion, we cannot avoid this reflection, that any degree of probability whatever, I had almost said any degree

of possibility whatever, of religion being true, ought to determine a rational creature so to act as to secure himself from punishment in a future state, and the loss of that happiness which may be attained. Therefore he has no pretence for alleging uncertainty as an excuse for his conduct, because he does not act in conformity with that in which there is no uncertainty at all. In the next place, it is giving to apparent difficulties more weight than they are entitled to. I only request any man to consider, first, the necessary allowances to be made for the short-sightedness and the weakness of the human understanding; secondly, the nature of those subjects concerning which religion treats, so remote from our senses, so different from our experience, so above and beyond the ordinary train and course of our ideas; and then say, whether difficulties, and great difficulties also, were not to be expected; nay further, whether they be not in some measure subservient to the very purpose of religion. The reward of everlasting life, and the punishment or misery of which we know no end, if they were present and immediate, could not be withstood, and would not leave any room for liberty or choice. But this sort of force upon the will is not what God designed; nor is suitable indeed to the nature of free, moral, and accountable agents. The truth is, and it was most likely beforehand that it would be so, that amidst some points which are dark, some which are dubious, there are many which are clear and certain. Now, I apprehend, that, if we act faithfully up to those points concerning which there is no question, most especially if we determine upon and choose our rule and course of life according to those principles of choice which all men whatever allow to be wise and safe principles, and the only principles which are so; and conduct ourselves steadfastly according to the rule thus chosen, the difficulties which remain in religion will not move or disturb us much; and will, as we proceed, become gradually less and fewer. Whereas, if we begin with objections; if all we consider about religion be its difficulties; but, most especially, if we permit the suggestion of difficulties to drive us into a practical rejection of religion itself, and to afford us, which is what we wanted, an excuse to ourselves for casting off its restraints; then the event will be, that its difficulties will multiply upon us; its light grow more and more dim, and we shall settle in the worst and most hopeless of all conditions; the last condition, I will venture to say, in which any man living would wish his son, or any one whom he loved, and for whose happiness he was anxious, to be placed; a life of confirmed vice and dissoluteness; founded in a formal renunciation of religion.

He that has to preach Christianity to persons in this state, has to preach to stones. He must not expect to be heard, either with complacency or seriousness, or patience, or even to escape contempt and derision. Habits of thinking are fixed by habits of acting; and both too solidly fixed to be moved by human persuasion. God in his mercy, and by his providences, as well as by his Spirit, can touch and soften the heart of stone. And it is seldom perhaps, that, without some strong, and, it may be, sudden impressions of this kind, and from this source, serious sentiments ever penetrate dispositions hardened in the manner which we have here described.

SERMON II.

TASTE FOR DEVOTION.

But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.—John iv. 23, 24.

A TASTE and relish for religious exercise, or the want of it, is one of the marks and tokens by which we may judge whether our heart be right towards God or not. God is unquestionably an object of devotion to every creature which he has made capable of devotion; consequently, our minds can never be right towards him, unless they be in a devotional frame. It cannot be disputed, but that the Author and Giver of all things, upon whose will and whose mercy we depend for every thing we have, and for every thing we look for, ought to live in the thoughts and affections of his rational creatures. "Through thee have I been holden up ever since I was born: thou art he that took me from my mother's womb: my praise shall be always of thee." If there be such things as first sentiments towards God, these words of the Psalmist express them. That devotion to God is a duty, stands upon the same proof as that God exists. But devotion is an act of the mind strictly. In a certain sense, duty to a fellow-creature may be discharged if the outward act be performed, because the benefit to him depends upon the act. Not so with devotion. It is altogether the operation of the mind. God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit, that is, in mind and thought. The devotion of the mind may be, will be, ought to be, testified and accompanied by outward performances and expressions: but, without the mind going along with it, no form, no solemnity can avail, as a service to God. It is not so much a question under what mode men worship their Maker; but this is the question, whether their mind, and thoughts, and affections, accompany the mode which they adopt or not. I do not say, that modes of worship are indifferent things; for certainly one mode may be more rational, more edifying, more pure than another; but they are indifferent, in comparison with the question, whether the heart attend the worship, or be estranged from it.

These two points, then, being true; first, that devotion is a duty; secondly, that the heart must participate to make any thing we do devotion; it follows that the heart cannot be right toward God, unless it be possessed with a taste and relish for his service, and for what relates to it.

Men may, and many undoubtedly do, attend upon acts of religious worship, and even from religious motives, yet, at the same time, without this taste and relish of which we are speaking. Religion has no savour for them. I do not allude to the case of those who attend upon the public worship of the church, or of their communion, from compliance with custom, out of regard to station, for example's sake merely, from habit merely; still less to the case of those who have particular worldly views in so doing. I lay the case of such persons, for the present, out of the question; and I consider only the case of those, who knowing and believing the worship of God

to be a duty, and that the wilful neglect of this, as of other duties, must look forward to future punishment, do join in worship from a principle of obedience, from a consideration of those consequences which will follow disobedience; from the fear indeed of God, and the dread of his judgments (and so far from motives of religion,) yet without any taste or relish for religious exercise itself. That is the case I am considering. It is not for us to presume to speak harshly of any conduct, which proceeds, in any manner, from a regard to God, and the expectation of a future judgment. God, in his Scriptures, holds out to man terrors, as well as promises; punishment after death, as well as reward. Undoubtedly he intended those motives which he himself proposes, to operate and have their influence. Wherever they operate, good ensues; very great and important good, compared with the cases in which they do not operate; yet not all the good we would desire, not all which is attainable, not all which we ought to aim at, in our Christian course. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but calling it the beginning, implies that we ought to proceed further; namely, from his fear to his love.

To apply this distinction to the subject before us: the man who serves God from a dread of his displeasure, and therefore in a certain sense by constraint, is, beyond all comparison, in a better situation as touching his salvation, than he who defies this dread and breaks through this constraint. He, in a word, who obeys, from whatever motive his obedience springs, provided it be a religious motive, is of a character, as well as in a condition, infinitely preferable to the character and condition of the man whom no motives whatever can induce to perform his duty. Still it is true, that if he feels not within himself a taste and relish for the service which he performs, (to say nothing of the consideration how much less acceptable his services may be,) and for devotion itself, he wants one satisfactory evidence of his heart being right towards God. A further progress in religion will give him this evidence, but it is not yet attained: as yet, therefore, there is a great deficiency.

The taste and relish for devotion, of which we are speaking, is what good men in all ages have felt strongly. It appears in their history: it appears in their writings. The book of Psalms, in particular, was, great part of it, composed under the impression of this principle. Many of the Psalms are written in the truest spirit of devotion; and it is one test of the religious frame of our own minds, to observe whether we have a relish for these compositions; whether our hearts are stirred as we read them; whether we perceive in them words alone, a mere letter, or so many grateful, gratifying sentiments towards God in unison with what we ourselves feel, or have before felt. And what we are saying of the book of Psalms, is true of many religious books that are put into our hands, especially books of devotional religion; which, though they be human compositions, and nothing more, are of a similar cast with the devotional writings of Scripture, and excellently calculated for their purpose.* We read of aged persons, who passed the greatest part of their time in acts of devotion, and passed it with enjoyment. "Anna, the prophetess, was of great age, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers, night and day." The first Christians, so far as can be gathered from their history in the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, as well as from the subsequent account left of them, took great delight in exercises of devotion. These seemed to form, indeed, the principal satisfaction of their lives in this world. "Continuing daily, with one accord, in the temple, and breaking bread," that is, celebrating the holy communion, "from house to house, they eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." In this spirit Christians set out, finding the greatest gratification they were capable of, in acts and exercises of devotion. A great deal of what is said in the New Testament, by St. Paul in particular, about "rejoicing in the Lord, rejoicing in the Holy Ghost, rejoicing in hope, rejoicing in consolation, rejoicing in themselves, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," refer to the pleasure, and the high and spiritual comfort which they found in religious exercises. Much, I fear, of this spirit is fled. There is a coldness in our devotions, which argues a decay of religion amongst us. Is it true that men, in these days, perform religious exercises as frequently as they ought, or as those did who have gone before us in the Christian course? that is one question to be asked: but there is also another question of still greater importance, *viz.* do they find in these performances that gratification which the first and best disciples of the religion actually found? which they ought to find; and which they would find, did they possess the taste and relish concerning which we are discoursing, and which if they do not possess, they want one great proof of their heart being right towards God.

If the spirit of prayer, as it is sometimes called, if the taste and relish for devotion, if a devotional frame of mind be within us, it will show itself in the turn and cast of our meditations, in the warmth, and earnestness, and frequency of our secret applications to God in prayer; in the deep, unfeigned, heart-piercing, heart-sinking sorrow of our confessions and our penitence; in the sincerity of our gratitude and of our praise; in our admiration of the divine bounty to his creatures; in our sense of particular mercies to ourselves. We shall pray much in secret. We shall address ourselves to God of our own accord, in our walks, our closet, our bed. Form, in these addresses, will be nothing. Every thing will come from the heart. We shall feed the flame of devotion by continually returning to the subject. No man, who is endued with the taste and relish we speak of, will have God long out of his mind. Under one view or other, God cannot be long out of a devout mind. "Neither was God in all his

* Amongst these I particularly recommend the prayers and devotions annexed to the new Whole Duty of Man. Bishop Burnet, in speaking of such kind of books, very truly says, "By the frequent reading of these books, by the relish that one has in them, by the delight they give, and the effects they produce, a man will plainly perceive whether his soul is made for divine matters, or not; what suitableness there is between him and them, and whether he is yet touched with such a sense of religion, as to be capable of dedicating himself to it."

thoughts," is a true description of a complete dereliction of religious principle; but it can, by no possibility, be the case with a man, who has the spirit of devotion, or any portion of that spirit, within him.

But it is not in our private religion alone, that the effect and benefit of this principle is perceived. The true taste and relish we so much dwell upon, will bring a man to the public worship of God; and, what is more, will bring him in such a frame of mind as to enable him to join in it with effect; with effect as to his own soul; with effect as to every object, both public and private, intended by public worship. Wanderings and forgetfulness, remissions and intermissions of attention, there will be; but these will be fewer and shorter, in proportion as more of this spirit is prevalent within us; and *some* sincere, some hearty, some deep, some true, and, as we trust, acceptable service will be performed, before we leave the place; some pouring forth of the soul unto God in prayer and in thanksgiving; in prayer, excited by wants and weaknesses; I fear also, by sins and neglects without number; and in thanksgivings, such as mercies, the most undeserved, ought to call forth from a heart, filled, as the heart of man should be, with a thorough consciousness of dependency and obligation.

Forms of public worship must, by their very nature, be in a great degree general; that is, must be calculated for the average condition of human and of Christian life; but it is one property of the devotional spirit, which we speak of, to give a particularity to our worship, though it be carried on in a congregation of fellow Christians, and expressed in terms which were framed and conceived for the use of all. And it does this by calling up recollections which will apply most closely, and bring home most nearly to ourselves, those terms and those expressions. For instance, in public worship, we thank God in general terms, that is, we join with the congregation in a general thanksgiving; but a devout man brings to church the recollection of special and particular mercies, particular bounties, particular providences, particular deliverances, particular relief recently experienced, specially and critically granted in the moment of want or danger, or eminently and supereminently vouchsafed to us individually. These he bears in his thoughts; he applies as he proceeds; that which was general, he makes close and circumstantial; his heart rises towards God, by a sense of mercies vouchsafed to himself. He does not, however, confine himself to those favours of Providence, which he enjoys above many others, or more than most others; he does not dwell upon distinctions alone; he sees God in all his goodness, in all his bounty. Bodily ease, for instance, is not less valuable, not less a mercy, because others are at ease, as well as himself. The same of his health, the use of his limbs, the faculties of his understanding. But what I mean is, that, in his mind, he brings to church mercies, in which he is interested, and that the most general expressions of thankfulness attach with him upon particular recollections of goodness, particular subjects of gratitude; so that the holy fervour of his devotion is supported; never wants, nor can want, materials to act upon. It is the office, therefore, of an internal spirit of devotion to make worship personal. We have seen that it will be so with thanksgiving. It will be the same likewise with every other part of divine worship. The confession of sins in our liturgy, and perhaps in all liturgies, is general; but our sins, alas! are particular: our conscience not only acknowledges a deplorable weakness and imperfection in the discharge of our duty, but is stung also with remembrances and compunctions, excited by particular offences. When we come, therefore, to confess our sins, let memory do its office faithfully. Let these sins rise up before our eyes. All language is imperfect. Forms, intended for general use, must consist of general terms, and are so far inadequate. They *may* be rehearsed by the lips with very little of application to our own case. But this *will* never be so, if the spirit of devotion be within us. A devout mind is exceedingly stirred, when it has sins to confess. None but a hardened sinner can even think of his sins without pain. But when he is to lay them, with supplications for pardon, before his Maker; when he is to expose his heart to God; it will always be with powerful inward feelings of guilt and calamity. It hath been well said of prayer, that prayer will either make a man leave off sinning, or sin will make him leave off prayer. And the same is true of confession. If confession be sincere, if it be such as a right capacity for devotion will make it to be, it will call up our proper and particular sins so distinctly to our view, their guilt, their danger, their end; whither they are carrying us; in what they will conclude; that, if we can return to them again without molestation from our conscience, then religion is not within us. If we have approached God in his worship so ineffectually as to ourselves, it is because we have not worshipped him in spirit; we may say of all we have done, "we drew near him with our lips, but our hearts were far from him."

What we have said concerning thanksgiving and confession, is likewise true of prayer universally. The spirit of devotion will apply our prayers to our wants. In forms of worship, be they ever so well composed, it is impossible to exhibit human wants, otherwise than in general expressions. But devotion will apply them. It will teach every man, in the first place, to know how indigent, how poor a creature without a continued exercise of mercy and supply of bounty from God, he would be; because, when he begins to enumerate his wants, he will be astonished at their multitude. What are we, any of us, but a complication of wants, which we have not in ourselves the power of supplying? But, beside those numerous wants, and that common helplessness, in which we all partake, every man has his own sore, his own grief, his own difficulties; every man has some distress, which he is suffering, or fearing. Nay, were worldly wishes satisfied, was worldly prosperity complete, he has always what is of more consequence than worldly prosperity to pray for; he has always his sins to pray against. Where temporal wants are few, spiritual wants are often the most and the greatest. The grace of God is always wanted. His governing, his preventing, his inspiring, his insisting grace is always wanted. Here, therefore, is a subject for prayer, were there no other; a subject personally and individually interesting in the highest degree; a subject above all others, upon which the spirit of devotion will be sure to fix.

I assign, therefore, as the first effect of a right spirit of devotion, that it gives particularity to all our worship. It applies, and it appropriates. Forms of worship may be general, but a spirit of devotion brings them home and close to each and every one.

One happy consequence of which is, that it prevents the tediousness of worship. Things which interest us, are not tedious. If we find worship tedious, it is because it does not interest us as it ought to do. We must allow (experience compels us to allow) for wanderings and inattentions, as amongst the infirmities of our infirm nature. But, as I have already said, even these will be fewer and shorter, in proportion as we are possessed of the spirit of devotion. Weariness will not be perceived, by reason of that succession of devout feelings and consciousnesses which the several offices of worship are calculated to excite. If our heart be in the business, it will not be tedious. If, in thanksgiving, it be lifted up by a sense of mercies, and a knowledge from whom they proceed, thanksgiving will be a grateful exercise, and not a tedious form. What relates to our sins and wants, though not of the same gratifying nature, though accompanied with deep, nay, with afflicting cause of humiliation and fear, must, nevertheless, be equally interesting, or more so, because it is of equal concernment to us, or of greater. In neither case, therefore, if our duty be performed as it ought to be, will tediousness be perceived.

I say, that the spirit of devotion removes from the worship of God the perception of tediousness, and with that also every disposition to censure or cavil at particular phrases, or expressions used in public worship. All such faults, even if they be real, and such observations upon them, are absorbed by the immense importance of the business in which we are engaged. Quickness in discovering blemishes of this sort is not the gift of a pious mind; still less either levity or acrimony in speaking of them.

Moreover, the spirit of devotion reconciles us to *repetitions*. In other subjects, repetition soon becomes tiresome and offensive. In devotion it is different. Deep, earnest, heartfelt devotion, naturally vents itself in repetition. Observe a person racked by excruciating bodily pain; or a person suddenly struck with the news of some dreadful calamity; or a person labouring under some cutting anguish of soul; and you will always find him breaking out into ejaculations, imploring from God support, mercy, and relief, over and over again, uttering the same prayer in the same words. Nothing, he finds, suits so well the extremity of his sufferings, the urgency of his wants, as a continual recurrence to the same cries, and the same call for divine aid. Our Lord himself, in his last agony, affords a high example of what we are saying: thrice he besought his heavenly Father; and thrice he used the same words. Repetition, therefore, is not only tolerable in devotion, but it is natural: it is even dictated by a sense of suffering, and an acuteness of feeling. It is coldness of affection, which requires to be enticed and gratified by continual novelty of idea, or expression, or action. The repetitions and prolixity of pharisaical prayers, which our Lord censures, are to be understood of those prayers which run out into mere formality and into great length; no sentiment or affection of the heart accompanying them; but uttered as a task, from an opinion (of which our Lord justly notices the absurdity,) that they should really be heard for their much speaking. Actuated by the spirit of devotion, we can never offend in this way, we can never be the object of this censure.

Lastly, and what has already been intimated, the spirit of devotion will cause our prayers to have an effect upon our practice. For example; if we repeated the *confession* in our liturgy with a true penitential sense of guilt upon our souls, we should not, day after day, be acknowledging to God our transgressions and neglects, and yet go on exactly in the same manner without endeavouring to make them less and fewer. We should plainly perceive that this was doing nothing towards salvation; and that, at this rate, we may be sinning and confessing all our lives. Whereas, was the right spirit of confessional piety, *viz.* thoughtfulness of soul, within us at the time, this would be the certain benefit, especially in the case of an often-repeated sin, that the mind would become more and more concerned, more and more filled with compunction and remorse, so as to be forced into amendment. Even the most heart-felt confession might not immediately do for us all that we could wish: yet by perseverance in the same, it would certainly, in a short time, produce its desired effect. For the same reason, we should not, time after time, *pray* that we might thenceforward, *viz.* after each time of so praying, lead godly, righteous, and sober lives, yet persist, just as usual, in ungodliness, unrighteousness, and intemperance. The thing would be impossible, if we prayed as we ought. So likewise, if real thankfulness of heart accompanied our *thanksgivings*, we should not pray in vain, that we might show forth the praises of God, not only with our lips but in our lives. As it is, thousands repeat these words without doing a single deed for the sake of pleasing God, exclusive of other motives, or refraining from a single thing they like to do out of the fear of displeasing him. So again, every time we hear the third service at church, we pray that God would incline our hearts to keep his commandments; yet immediately, perhaps, afterwards, allow our hearts and inclinations to wander, without controul, to whatever sinful temptation entices them. This, I say, all proceeds from the want of earnestness in our devotions. Strong devotion is an antidote against sin.

To conclude; a spirit of devotion is one of the greatest blessings; and, by consequence, the want of it one of the greatest misfortunes, which a Christian can experience. When it is present, it gives life to every act of worship which we perform; it makes every such act interesting and comfortable to ourselves. It is felt in our most retired moments, in our beds, our closets, our rides, our walks. It is stirred within us, when we are assembled with our children and servants in family prayer. It leads us to church, to the congregation of our fellow Christians there collected; it accompanies us in our joint offices of religion in an especial manner; and it returns us to our homes holier, and happier, and better; and lastly, what greatly enhances its value to every anxious Christian, it affords to himself a proof that his heart is right towards God: when it is followed up by a good life, by abstinence from sin, and endeavours after virtue, by avoiding evil and doing good, the proof and the satisfaction to be drawn from it are complete.

SERMON III.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

We love him, because he first loved us.
1 John iv. 19.

RELIGION may, and it can hardly, I think, be questioned but that it sometimes does, spring from terror, from grief, from pain, from punishment, from the approach of death; and provided it be sincere, that is, such as either actually produces, or as would produce a change of life, it is genuine religion, notwithstanding the bitterness, the violence, or, if it must be so called, the baseness and unworthiness, of the motive from which it proceeds. We are not to narrow the promises of God; and acceptance is promised to sincere penitence, without specifying the cause from which it originates, or confining it to one origin more than another. There are, however, higher, and worthier, and better motives, from which religion may begin in the heart; and on this account especially are they to be deemed better motives, that the religion which issues from them has a greater probability of being sincere. I repeat again, that sincere religion, from any motive, will be effectual; but there is a great deal of difference in the probability of its being sincere, according to the different cause in the mind from which it sets out.

The purest motive of human action is the love of God. There may be motives stronger and more general, but none so pure. The religion, the virtue, which owes its birth in the soul to this motive, is always genuine religion, always true virtue. Indeed, speaking of religion, I should call the love of God not so much the ground-work of religion, as religion itself. So far as religion is disposition, it is religion itself. But though of religion it be more than the ground-work, yet, being a disposition of mind, like other dispositions, it is the ground-work of action. Well might our blessed Saviour preach up, as he did, the love of God. It is the source of every thing which is good in man. I do not mean that it is the only source, or that goodness can proceed from no other, but that of all principles of conduct it is the safest, the best, the truest, the highest. Perhaps it is peculiar to the Jewish and Christian dispensations (and, if it be, it is a peculiar excellency in them) to have formally and solemnly laid down this principle, as a ground of human action. I shall not deny, that elevated notions were entertained of the Deity by some wise and excellent heathens; but even *these* did not, that I can find, so inculcate the love of that Deity, or so propose and state it to their followers, as to make it a governing, actuating principle of life amongst them. This did Moses, or rather God by the mouth of Moses, expressly, formally, solemnly. This did Christ, adopting, repeating, ratifying, what the law had already declared; and not only ratifying, but singling it out from the body of precepts which composed the old institution, and giving it a pre-eminence to every other.

Now this love, so important to our religious character, and, by its effect upon that, to our salvation, which is the end of religion; this love, I say, is to be engendered in the soul, not so much by hearing the words of others, or by instruction from others, as by a secret and habitual contemplation of God Almighty's bounty, and by a constant referring of our enjoyments and our hopes to his goodness. This is in a great degree a matter of habit; and, like all good habits, particularly mental habits, is what every person must form in himself and for himself by endeavour and perseverance. In this great article, as well as in others which are less, every man must be the author to himself of his train of thinking, be it good or bad. I shall only observe, that when this habit, or, as some would call it, this turn and course of thought, is once happily generated, occasions will continually arise to minister to its exercise and augmentation. A night's rest, or a comfortable meal, will immediately direct our gratitude to God. The use of our limbs, the possession of our senses; every degree of health, every hour of ease, every sort of satisfaction, which we enjoy, will carry our thoughts to the same object. But if our enjoyments raise our affections, still more will our hopes do the same; and, most of all beyond comparison, those hopes which religion inspires. Think of man, and think of heaven; think what he is, and what it is in his power hereafter to become. Think of this again and again: and it is impossible, but that the prospect of being so rewarded for our poor labours, so resting from our past troubles, so forgiven for our repented sins, must fill our hearts with the deepest thankfulness; and thankfulness is love. Towards the author of an obligation which is infinite, thankfulness is the only species of love that can exist.

But, moreover, the love of God is specifically represented in Scripture as one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. The love of God shed abroad in the heart is described as one of the works of the Spirit upon the souls of Christians. Now whatever is represented in Scripture to be the gift of the Spirit, is to be sought for by earnest and peculiar prayer. That is the practical use to be made of, and the practical consequence to be drawn from, such representations; the very purpose probably for which they were delivered: the mere point of doctrine being seldom that in which Scripture declarations rest. Let us not fail therefore; let us not cease to entreat the Father of mercies, that the love of him may be shed abroad in our hearts continually. It is one of the things in which we are sure that our prayers are right in their object; in which also we may humbly hope, that, unless obstructed by ourselves, they will not be in vain.

Nor let it be said that this aid is superfluous, forasmuch as nature herself had provided sufficient means for exciting this sentiment. This is true with respect to those who are in the full, or in any thing near the full, enjoyment of the gifts of nature. With them I do allow that nothing but a criminal stupefaction can hinder the love of God from being felt. But this is not the case with all; nor with any at all times. Afflictions, sickness, poverty, the maladies and misfortunes of life, will interrupt and damp this sensation, so far as it depends upon our actual experience of God's bounty. I do not say that the evils of life ought to have this effect: taken in connexion with a future state, they certainly ought not; because, when viewed in that relation, afflictions and calamities become trials, warnings, chastisements; and when sanctified by their fruits, when made the means of weaning us from the world, bringing us nearer to God, and of purging away that dross and defilement which our souls have contracted, are in truth

amongst the first of favours and of blessings: nevertheless, as an apostle himself confesses, they are for a season grievous; they are disheartening; and they are too apt to produce an unfavourable effect upon our gratitude. Wherefore it is upon these occasions most especially, that the aid of God's Spirit may be required to maintain in our souls the love of God.

Let those, therefore, who are conscious to themselves that they have not the love of God within them as they ought to have it, endeavour to acquire and to increase this holy principle by seriousness of mind, by habitual meditation, by devout reading, devout conversation, devout society. These are all aids and helps towards inducing upon the mind this most desirable, nay, rather let me call it, this blessed frame and temper, and of fixing us in it: and forasmuch as it is declared in Scripture to be shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit of God, let us labour in our prayers for this best gift.

The next consideration upon the subject is the fruit and effect of this disposition upon our lives. If it be asked how does the love of God operate in the production of virtuous conduct, I shall answer, that it operates exactly in the same manner as affection towards a parent or gratitude towards a human benefactor operates, by stirring up a strong rebuke in the mind upon the thought of offending him. This lays a constant check upon our conduct. And this sensation is the necessary accompaniment of love; it cannot, I think, be separated from it. But it is not the whole of its influence. Love and gratitude towards a benefactor not only fill us with remorse and with internal shame, whenever, by our wilful misbehaviour, we have given cause to that benefactor to be displeased with us; but also prompts us with a desire upon all occasions of doing what we believe he wills to be done, which, with respect to God, is in other words a desire to serve him. Now this is not only a restraint from vice, but an incitement to action. Instructed, as in Christian countries mankind generally are, in the main articles of human duty, this motive will seldom mislead them.

In one important respect the love of God excels all moral principles whatever; and that is, in its comprehensiveness. It reaches every action; it includes every duty. You cannot mention another moral principle which has this property in the same perfection. For instance, I can hardly name a better moral principle than humanity. It is a principle which every one commends, and justly: yet in this very article of comprehensiveness it is deficient, when compared with the love of God. It will prompt us undoubtedly to do kind, and generous, and compassionate things towards our friends, our acquaintance, our neighbours, and towards the poor. In our relation to, and in our intercourse with, mankind, especially towards those who are dependent upon us, or over whom we have power, it will keep us from hardness, and rigour, and cruelty. In all this it is excellent. But it will not regulate us, as we require to be regulated, in another great branch of Christian duty, self-government and self-restraint. We may be exceedingly immoral and licentious in sinful indulgences, without violating our principle of humanity; at least, without specifically violating it, and without being sensible of violating it. And this is by no means an uncommon case or character, namely, humanity of temper subsisting along with the most criminal licentiousness, and under a total want of personal self-government. The reason is, that the principle of conduct, though excellent as far as it goes, fails in comprehensiveness. Not so with the love of God. He, who is influenced by that, feels its influence in all parts of duty, upon every occasion of action, throughout the whole course of conduct.

The thing with most of us to be examined into and ascertained is, whether it indeed guide us at all; whether it be within us an efficient motive. I am far from taking upon me to say that it is essential to this principle to exclude all other principles of conduct especially the dread of God's wrath and of its tremendous consequences: or that a person, who is deterred from evil actions by the dread of God's wrath, is obliged to conclude, that because he so much dreads God, he cannot love him. I will not venture to say any such thing. The Scripture, it is true, speaking of the love of God, hath said, that "perfect love casteth out fear;" but it hath not said that in the soul of man this love is ever perfect: what the Scripture hath thus declared of perfect love is no more than what is just. The love of God, were it perfect, that is to say, were it such as his nature, his relation, his bounty to us deserves; were it adequate either to its object or to our obligation, were it carried up as high as in a perfectly rational and virtuous soul it might be carried, would, I believe, absorb every other motive and every other principle of action whatever, even the fear of God amongst the rest. This principle, by its nature, *might* gain a complete possession of the heart and will, so that a person acting under its influence would take nothing else into the account, would reflect upon no other consequence or consideration whatever. Possibly, nay probably, this is the condition of some higher orders of spirits, and may become ours by future improvement, and in a more exalted state of existence; but it cannot, I am afraid, be said to be our condition now. The love of God subsists in the heart of good men as a powerful principle of action: but it subsists there in conjunction with other principles, especially with the fear of him. All goodness is in a certain degree comparative; and I think, that he may be called a good man in whom this principle dwells and operates at all. Wherefore to obtain; when obtained, to cultivate, to cherish, to strengthen, to improve it, ought to form the most anxious concern of our spiritual life. He that loveth God keepeth his commandments; but still the love of God is something more than keeping the commandments. For which reason we must acquire, what many, it is to be feared, have even yet to begin, a habit of contemplating God in the bounties and blessings of his creation. I think that religion can hardly subsist in the soul without this habit in some degree. But the greater part of us, such is the natural dulness of our souls, require something more exciting and stimulating than the sensations which large and general views of nature or of providence produce; something more particular to ourselves, and which more nearly touches our separate happiness. Now of examples of this kind, namely, of direct and special mercies towards himself, no one, who calls to mind the passages and providences of his life, can be destitute. There is one topic of gratitude falling under this head, which almost every man,

who is tolerably faithful and exact in his self-recollections, will find in events upon which he has to look back; and it is this: How often have we been spared, when we might have been overtaken and cut off in the midst of sin! Of all the attributes of God, forbearance, perhaps, is that which we have most to acknowledge. We cannot want occasions to bring the remembrance of it to our thoughts. Have there not been occasions, in which, ensnared in vice, we might have been detected and exposed; have been crushed by punishment or shame, have been irrecoverably ruined? occasions in which we might have been suddenly stricken with death, in a state of soul the most unfit for it that was possible! That we were none of these, that we have been preserved from these dangers, that our sin was not our destruction, that instant judgment did not overtake us, is to be attributed to the long-suffering of God. Supposing, what is undoubtedly true, that the secrets of our conduct were known to him at the time, it can be attributed to no other cause. Now this is a topic which can never fail to supply subjects of thankfulness, and of a species of thankfulness, which must bear with direct force upon the regulation of our conduct. We were not destroyed when we might have been destroyed, and when we merited destruction. We have been preserved for further trial. This is, or ought to be a touching reflection. How deeply, therefore, does it behove us not to trifle with the patience of God, not to abuse this enlarged space, this respited, protracted season of repentance, by plunging afresh into the same crimes, or other, or greater crimes? It shows that we are not to be wrought upon by mercy: that our gratitude is not moved; that things are wrong within us; that there is a deplorable void and chasm in our religious principles, the love of God not being present in our hearts.

But to return to that with which we set out: religion may spring from various principles, begin in various motives. It is not for us to narrow the promises of God which belong to sincere religion, from whatever cause it originates. But of these principles, the purest, the surest, is the love of God, forasmuch as the religion which proceeds from it is sincere, constant, and universal. It will not, like fits of terror and alarm (which yet we do not despise) produce a temporary religion. The love of God is an abiding principle. It will not, like some other, (and these also good and laudable principles of action, as far as they go,) produce a partial religion. It is co-extensive with all our obligations. Practical Christianity may be comprised in three words; devotion, self-government, and benevolence. The love of God in the heart is a fountain, from which these three streams of virtue will not fail to issue. The love of God also is a guard against error in conduct, because it is a guard against those evil influences which mislead the understanding in moral questions. In some measure, it supplies the place of every rule. He who has it truly within him, has little to learn. Look steadfastly to the will of God, which he who loves God necessarily does, practise what you believe to be well pleasing to him, leave off what you believe to be displeasing to him: cherish, confirm, strengthen the principle itself which sustains this course of external conduct, and you will not want many lessons, you need not listen to any other monitor.

SERMON IV.

MEDITATING UPON RELIGION.

Have I not remembered thee in my bed: and thought upon thee when I was waking?—Psalm lxiii. 7.

The life of God in the soul of man, as it is sometimes emphatically called, the Christian life, that is, or the progress of Christianity in the heart of any particular person, is marked, amongst other things, by religion gradually gaining possession of the thoughts. It has been said, that, if we thought about religion as it deserved, we should never think about any thing else; nor with strictness, perhaps, can we deny the truth of this proposition. Religious concerns do so surpass and outweigh in value and importance all concerns beside, that did they occupy a place in our minds proportioned to that importance, they would, in truth, exclude every other but themselves. I am not, therefore, one of those who wonder when I see a man *engrossed* with religion: the wonder with me is, that men care and think so little concerning it. With all the allowances which must be made for our employments, our activities, our anxieties, about the interests and occurrences of the present life, it is still true, that our forgetfulness, and negligence, and indifference about religion are much greater than can be excused, or can easily be accounted for by these causes. Few men are so busy but that they contrive to find time for any gratification their heart is set upon, and thought for any subject in which they are interested: they want not leisure for these, though they want leisure for religion. Notwithstanding, therefore, singular cases, if indeed there be any cases of being over-religious, over-intent upon spiritual affairs, the real and true complaint is all on the other side, that men think not about them enough, as they ought, as is reasonable, as it is their duty to do. That is the malady and the mischief. The cast and turn of our infirm and fleshly nature lean all on that side. For, first, this nature is affected chiefly by what we see. Though the things which concern us most deeply be not seen; for this very reason, that they are not seen, they do not affect us as they ought. Though these things ought to be meditated upon, and must be acted upon, one way or other, long before we come actually to experience them, yet in fact we do not meditate upon them, we do not act with a view to them, till something gives us alarm, gives reason to believe that they are approaching fast upon us, that they are at hand, or shortly will be, that we shall indeed experience what they are.

The world of spirits, the world for which we are destined, is invisible to us. Hear St. Paul's account of this matter: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." "We walk by faith, not by sight; faith is the evidence of things not seen." Some great invisible agent there must be in the universe; "the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Now if the great Author of all things be himself invisible to our senses, and if our relation to him must necessarily form the greatest interest and concern of our existence, then it follows, that our greatest interest and con-

cern are with those things which are now invisible. "We are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." The first infirmity, therefore, which religion has to conquer within us, is that which binds down our attention to the things which we see. The natural man is immersed in sense: nothing takes hold of his mind but what applies immediately to his sense; but this disposition will not do for religion: the religious character is founded in hope, as contradistinguished from experience, in perceiving by the mind what is not perceived by the eye: unless a man can do this, he cannot be religious: and with many it is a great difficulty. This power of hope, which, as St. Paul observes of it, is that which places the invisible world before our view, is specifically described in Scripture, as amongst the gifts of the Spirit, the natural man standing indeed much in need of it, being altogether of an opposite tendency. Hear St. Paul's prayer for his Roman converts; "The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." Again to the Galatians, how does he describe the state of mind of a Christian? "we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."

Again; another impediment to the thought of religion is the faculty and the habit we have acquired of regarding its concerns as at a distance. A child is affected by nothing but what is present, and many thousands in this respect continue children all their lives. In a degree this weakness cleaves to us all; produces upon us the same effect under a different form; namely, in this way, when we find ourselves necessarily disturbed by near or approaching evil, we have the means of forgetting the nearness or the approach of that, which must bring with it the greatest evil or the greatest good we are capable of, our change at death. Though we cannot exactly offer any arguments to show that it is either certainly or probably at a distance, yet we have the means of regarding it in our minds as though it were at a distance; and this even in cases in which it cannot possibly be so. Do we prepare for it? no: why? because we regard it in our imaginations as at a distance: we cannot prove that it is at a distance; nay, the contrary may be proved against us: but still we regard it so in our imaginations, and regard it so practically; for imagination is with most men the practical principle. But, however strong and general this delusion be, has it any foundation in reason? Can that be thought at a distance which may come to-morrow, which must come in a few years? In *a very* few years to most of us, in a few years to all, it will be fixed and decided, whether we are to be in heaven or hell; yet we go on without thinking of it, without preparing for it: and it is exceedingly observable, that it is only in religion we thus put away the thought from us. In the settlement of our worldly affairs after our deaths, which exactly depend on the same event, commence at the same time, are equally distant, if either were distant, equally liable to uncertainty as to when the disposition will take place; in these, I say, men are not usually negligent, or think that by reason of its distance it can be neglected, or by reason of the uncertainty when it may happen, left unprovided for. This is a flagrant inconsistency, and proves decisively that religion possesses a small portion of our concern, in proportion with what it ought to do. For instead of giving to it that superiority which is due to immortal concerns, above those which are transitory, perishable, and perishing, it is not even put upon an equality with them; nor with those which, in respect to time, and the uncertainty of time, are under the same circumstances with itself.

Thirdly; the spiritual character of religion is another great impediment to its entering our thoughts. All religion, which is effectual, is, and must be, spiritual. Offices and ordinances are the handmaids and instruments of the spiritual religion, calculated to generate, to promote, to maintain, to uphold it in the heart, but the thing itself is purely spiritual. Now the flesh weigheth down the spirit, as with a load and burden. It is difficult to rouse the human constitution to a sense and perception of what is purely spiritual. They who are addicted, not only to vice, but to gratifications and pleasures; they who know no other rule than to go with the crowd in their career of dissipation and amusement; they whose attentions are all fixed and engrossed by business, whose minds from morning to night are counting and computing; the weak, and foolish, and stupid; lastly, which comprehends a class of mankind deplorably numerous, the indolent and slothful; none of these can bring themselves to meditate upon religion. The last class slumber over its interests and concerns; perhaps they cannot be said to forget it absolutely, but they slumber over the subject, in which state nothing as to their salvation gets done, no decision, no practice. There are, therefore, we see, various obstacles and infirmities in our constitutions, which obstruct the reception of religious ideas in our mind, still more such a voluntary entertainment of them as may bring forth fruit. It ought, therefore, to be our constant prayer to God, that he will open our hearts to the influence of his word, by which is meant that he will so quicken and actuate the sensibility and vigour of our minds, as to enable us to attend to the things which really and truly belong to our peace.

So soon as religion gains that hold and that possession of the heart, which it must do to become the means of our salvation, things change within us, as in many other respects, so especially in this. We think a great deal more frequently about it, we think of it for a longer continuance, and our thoughts of it have much more of vivacity and impressiveness. First, we begin to think of religion more frequently than we did. Heretofore we never thought of it at all, except when some melancholy incident had sunk our spirits, or had terrified our apprehensions; it was either from lowness or from fright that we thought of religion at all. Whilst things went smoothly, and prosperously, and gaily with us, whilst all was well and safe in our health and circumstances, religion was the last thing we wished to turn our minds to: we did not want to have our pleasure disturbed by it. But it is not so with us now: there is a change in our minds in this respect. It enters our thoughts very often, both by day and by night, "Have I not remembered thee in my bed, and thought upon thee when I was waking?" This change is one of the prognostications of the religious principle forming within us. Secondly,

these thoughts *settle* themselves upon our minds. They were formerly fleeting and transitory, as the cloud which passes along the sky; and they were so for two reasons; first, they found no congenial temper and disposition to rest upon, no seriousness, no posture of mind proper for their reception; and, secondly, because we of our own accord, by a positive exertion and endeavour of our will, put them away from us, we disliked their presence, we rejected and cast them out. But it is not so now; we entertain and retain religious meditations, as being, in fact, those which concern us most deeply. I do not speak of the solid comfort which is to be found in them, because that belongs to a more advanced state of Christian life than I am now considering: that will come afterwards; and, when it does come, will form the support, and consolation, and happiness of our lives. But whilst the religious principle is forming, at least during the first steps of that formation, we are induced to think about religion chiefly from a sense of its vast consequences: and this reason is enough to make wise men think about it both long and closely. Lastly, our religious thoughts come to have a vivacity and impressiveness in them which they had not hitherto: that is to say, they interest us much more than they did. There is a wonderful difference in the light in which we see the same thing, in the force and strength with which it rises up before our view, in the degree with which we are affected by it. This difference is experienced in no one thing more than in religion, not only between different persons, but by the same person at different times, the same person in different stages of the Christian progress, the same person under different measures of divine grace.

Finally, would we know whether we have made, or are making, any advances in Christianity or not? These are the marks which will tell us. Do we think more frequently about religion than we used to do? Do we cherish and entertain these thoughts for a longer continuance than we did? Do they interest us more than formerly? Do they impress us more, do they strike us more forcibly, do they sink deeper? If we perceive this, then we perceive a change, upon which we may ground good hopes and expectations; if we perceive it not, we have cause for very afflicting apprehensions, that the power of religion hath not yet visited us; cause for deep and earnest intercession with God for the much wanted succour of his Holy Spirit.

SERMON V.

OF THE STATE AFTER DEATH.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.—1 John iii. 2.

One of the most natural solicitudes of the human mind, is to know what will become of us after death, what is already become of those friends who are gone. I do not so much mean the great question, whether we and they shall be happy or miserable, as I mean the question, what is the nature and condition of that state which we are so soon to try. This solicitude, which is both natural and strong, is sometimes, however, carried too far: and this is the case, when it renders us uneasy, or dissatisfied, or impatient under the obscurity in which the subject is placed: and placed, not only in regard to us, or in regard to common men, but in regard even to the apostles themselves of our Lord, who were taught from his mouth, as well as immediately instructed by his Spirit. Saint John, the author of the text which I have read to you, was one of these; not only an apostle, but of all the apostles, perhaps, the most closely connected with his Master, and admitted to the most intimate familiarity with him. What it was allowed, therefore, for man to know, Saint John knew. Yet this very Saint John acknowledges "that it doth not yet appear what we shall be;" the exact nature, and condition, and circumstances of our future state are yet hidden from us.

I think it credible that this may, in a very great degree, arise from the nature of the human understanding itself. Our Saviour said to Nicodemus, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" It is evident from the strain of this extraordinary conversation, that the disbelief on the part of Nicodemus, to which our Saviour refers, was that which arose from the difficulty of comprehending the subject. Therefore our Saviour's words to him may be construed thus: If what I have just now said concerning the new birth, concerning being born again, concerning being born of the Spirit, concerning the agency of the Spirit, which are all "earthly things," that is, are all things that pass in the hearts of Christians in this their present life, and upon this earth; if this information prove so difficult, that you cannot bring yourself to believe it, by reason of the difficulty of apprehending it; "how shall ye believe?" how would ye be able to conquer the much greater difficulties which would attend my discourse, "if I told you heavenly things?" that is to say, if I speak to you of those things which are passing, or which will pass, in heaven, in a totally different state and stage of existence, amongst natures and beings unlike yours? The truth seems to be, that the human understanding, constituted as it is, though fitted for the purposes for which we want it, that is, though capable of receiving the instruction and knowledge, which are necessary for our conduct and the discharge of our duty, has a native original incapacity for the reception of any distinct knowledge of our future condition. The reason is, that all our conceptions and ideas are drawn from experience, (not, perhaps, all immediately from experience, but experience lies at the bottom of them all,) and no language, no information, no instruction, can do more for us, than teach us the relation of the ideas which we have. Therefore, so far as we can judge, no words whatever that could have been used, no account or description that could have been written down, would have been able to convey to us a conception of our future state, constituted as our understandings now are. I am far from saying, that it was not in the power of God, by immediate inspiration, to have struck light and ideas into our minds, of which naturally we have no conception. I am far from saying, that he could not, by an act of his power, have assumed a human being, or the soul of a human being into heaven; and have shown to him or it, the

nature and the glories of that kingdom: but it is evident, that, unless the whole order of our present world be changed, such revelations as these must be rare; must be limited to very extraordinary persons, and very extraordinary occasions. And even then, with respect to others, it is to be observed, that the ordinary modes of communication by speech or writing are inadequate to the transmitting of any knowledge or information of this sort: and from a cause, which has already been noticed, namely, that language deals only with the ideas which we have; that these ideas are all founded in experience; that probably, most probably indeed, the things of the next world are very remote from any experience which we have in this; the consequence of which is, that, though the inspired person might himself possess this supernatural knowledge, he could not impart it to any other person not in like manner inspired. When, therefore, the nature and constitution of the human understanding is considered, it can excite no surprise, it ought to excite no complaint, it is no fair objection to Christianity, "that it doth not yet appear what we shall be." I do not say that the imperfection of our understanding forbids it, (for, in strictness of speech, that is not imperfect which answers the purpose designed by it,) but the present constitution of our understanding forbids it.

"It doth not yet appear," saith the apostle, "what we shall be, but this we know, that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." As if he had said, Though we be far from understanding the subject either accurately or clearly, or from having conceptions and notions adequate to the truth and reality of the case, yet we know something: this, for instance, we know, that, "when he shall appear, we shall be like him." The best commentary upon this last sentence of Saint John's text may be drawn from the words of Saint Paul. His words state the same proposition more fully when he tells us (Phil. iii. 21) "that Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body." From the two passages together, we may lay down the following points. First, that we shall have bodies. One apostle informs us, that we shall be like him; the other, that our vile body shall be like his glorious body: therefore we shall have bodies. Secondly, that these bodies shall be greatly changed from what they are at present. If we had had nothing but Saint John's text to have gone upon, this would have been implied. "When he shall appear, we *shall* be like him." We are not like him now, we *shall be* like him; we shall hereafter be like him, namely, when he shall appear. Saint John's words plainly regard this similitude as a future thing, as what we shall acquire, as belonging to what we shall become, in contradistinction to what we are. Therefore they imply a change which must take place in our bodily constitution. But what Saint John's words imply, Saint Paul's declare. "He shall change our vile bodies." That point, therefore, may be considered as placed out of question.

That such a change is necessary, that such a change is to be expected, is agreeable even to the established order of nature. Throughout the universe this rule holds, *viz.* that the body of every animal is suited to its state. Nay, more; when an animal changes its state, it changes its body. When animals which lived under water, afterwards live in air, their bodies are changed almost entirely, so as hardly to be known by any one mark of resemblance to their former figure; as, for example, from worms and caterpillars to flies and moths. These are common transformations; and the like happens, when an animal changes its element from the water to the earth, or an insect from living under ground to flying abroad in the air. And these changes take place in consequence of that unalterable rule, that the body be fitted to the state; which rule obtains throughout every region of nature with which we are acquainted. Now our present bodies are by no means fitted for heaven. So saith Saint Paul expressly, "Flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God; corruption doth not inherit incorruption." Between our bodies as they are now constituted, and the state into which we shall come then, there is a physical, necessary, and invincible incongruity. Therefore they must undergo a change, and that change will, first, be universal, at least as to those who shall be saved; secondly, it will be sudden; thirdly, it will be very great. First, it will be universal. Saint Paul's words in the fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians are, "We shall all be changed." I do, however, admit, that this whole chapter of Saint Paul's relates only to those who shall be saved; of no others did he intend to speak. This, I think, has been satisfactorily made out; but the argument is too long to enter upon at present. If so, the expression of the apostle, "We shall all be changed," proves only that we who are saved, who are admissible into his kingdom, shall be changed. Secondly, the change will be instantaneous. So Saint Paul describes it; "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the dead shall be raised incorruptible;" and therefore their nature must have undergone the change. Thirdly, it will be very great. No change, which we experience or see, can bear any assignable proportion to it in degree or importance. It is this corruptible putting on incorruption; it is this mortal putting on immortality. Now it has often been made a question, whether, after so great a change, the bodies, with which we shall be clothed, are to be deemed new bodies, or the same bodies under a new form. This is a question which has often been agitated, but the truth is, it is of no moment or importance. We continue the same to all intents and purposes, so long as we are sensible and conscious that we are so. In this life our bodies are continually changing. Much, no doubt, and greatly is the body of every human being changed from his birth to his maturity: yet, because we are nevertheless sensible of what we are, sensible to ourselves that we are the same, we are in reality the same. Alterations, in the size or form of our visible persons, make no change in that respect. Nor would they, if they were much greater, as in some animals they are; or even if they were total. Vast, therefore, as that change must be, or rather, as the difference must be between our present and our future bodies, as to their substance, their nature, or their form, it will not hinder us from remaining the same, any more than the alterations which our bodies undergo in this life, hinder us from remaining the same. We know within ourselves that we are the same; and that is sufficient: and this knowledge or consciousness we shall rise with from the grave, whatever be the bodies with which we be clothed.

The two apostles go one step further when they tell us, that we shall be like Christ himself; and that this likeness will consist in a resemblance to

his glorified body. Now of the glorified body of Christ all that we know is this. At the transfiguration upon the mount, the three apostles saw the person of our Lord in a very different state from its ordinary state. "He was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Saint Luke describes it thus: "The fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening: and behold there talked with him two men who appeared in glory." Then he adds, "that the apostles, when they awaked, saw his glory." Now I consider this transaction as a specimen of the change of which a glorified body is susceptible. Saint Stephen, at his martyrdom, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Saint Paul, at his conversion, saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about him; and in this light Christ then was. These instances, like the former, only show the changes and the appearances of which a glorified body is susceptible, not the form or condition in which it must necessarily be found, or must always continue. You will observe, that it was necessary that the body of our Lord at his transfiguration, at his appearance after his resurrection, at his ascension into heaven, at his appearance to Stephen, should preserve a resemblance to his human person upon earth, because it was by that resemblance alone he could be known to his disciples, at least by any means of knowledge naturally belonging to them in that human state. But this was not always necessary, nor continues to be necessary. Nor is there any sufficient reason to suppose, that this resemblance to our present bodies will be retained in our future bodies, or be at all wanted. Upon the whole, the conclusions, which we seem authorised to draw from these intimations of Scripture, are,

First, that we shall have bodies.

Secondly, that they will be so far different from our present bodies, as to be suited, by that difference, to the state and life into which they are to enter, agreeably to that rule which prevails throughout universal nature; that the body of every being is suited to its state, and that, when it changes its state, it changes its body.

Thirdly, that it is a question by which we need not at all be disturbed, whether the bodies with which we shall arise be new bodies, or the same bodies under a new form; for,

Fourthly, no alteration will hinder us from remaining the same, provided we are sensible and conscious that we are so; any more than the changes which our visible person undergoes even in this life, and which from infancy to manhood are undoubtedly very great, hinder us from being the same, to ourselves and in ourselves, and to all intents and purposes whatsoever.

Lastly, that though, from the imperfection of our faculties, we neither are, nor, without a constant miracle upon our minds, could be made able to conceive or comprehend the nature of our future bodies; yet we are assured that the change will be infinitely beneficial; that our new bodies will be infinitely superior to those which we carry about with us in our present state; in a word, that whereas our bodies are now comparatively vile, (and are so denominated,) they will so far rise in glory, as to be made like unto his glorious body; that whereas, through our pilgrimage here, we *have* borne, that which we inherited, the image of the earthy, of our parent, the first Adam, created for a life upon this earth; we shall, in our future state, bear another image, a new resemblance, that of the heavenly inhabitant, the second man, the second nature, even that of the Lord from heaven.

SERMON VI.

ON PURITY OF THE HEART AND AFFECTIONS.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.—1 John iii. 2, 3.

When the text tells us, "that every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself," it must be understood as intending to describe the natural, proper, and genuine effects of this hope, rather, perhaps, than the actual effects, or at least as effects, which, in point of experience, universally follow from it. As hath already been observed, the whole text relates to sincere Christians, and to these alone; the word *we*, in the preceding part of it, comprises sincere Christians, and no others. Therefore the word *every man*, must be limited to the same sort of men, of whom he was speaking before. It is not probable, that in the same sentence he would change the persons and characters concerning whom he discoursed. So that if it had been objected to Saint John, that, in point of fact, every man did not purify himself who had this hope in him, he would have replied, I believe, that these were not the kind of persons he had in his view; that throughout the whole of the text, he had in contemplation the religious condition and character of sincere Christians, and no other. When in the former part of the text, he talked of *we* being the sons of God, of *we* being like Christ, he undoubtedly meant sincere Christians alone; and it would be strange if he meant any other in this latter part of the text, which is in fact a continuation of the same discourse, of the same subject, nay, a portion of the same sentence.

I have said thus much in order to obviate the contrariety which there seems to be between Saint John's assertion and experience. Experience, I acknowledge, proves the inefficacy, in numerous cases, of religious hope and religious motives: and it must be so; for if religious motives operated certainly and necessarily, if they produced their effect by an infallible power over the mind, we should only be machines necessarily actuated; and that certainly is not the thing which a moral agent, a religious agent, was intended to be. It was intended that we should have the power of doing right, and, consequently, of doing wrong; for he who cannot do wrong, cannot do right by choice; he is a mere tool and instrument, or rather a machine, whichever he does. Therefore all moral motives, and all religious motives, unless they went to deprive man of his liberty entirely, which they most certainly were not meant to do, must depend for their influence and success upon the man himself.

This success, therefore, is various; but when

it fails, it is owing to some vice and corruption in the mind itself. Some men are very little affected by religious exhortation of any kind, either by hearing or reading. That is a vice and corruption in the mind itself. Some men, though affected, are not affected sufficiently to influence their lives. That is a vice and corruption in the mind, or rather in the heart; and so it will always be found. But I do not so much wonder at persons being unaffected by what others tell them, be those others who they may, preachers, or teachers, or friends, or parents, as I wonder at seeing men not affected by their own thoughts, their own meditations; yet it is so; and when it is so, it argues a deep corruption of mind indeed. We can think upon the most serious, the most solemn subjects, without any sort of consequence upon our lives. Shall we call this seared insensibility? shall we call it a fatal inefficiency of the rational principle within us? shall we confess, that the mind has lost its government over the man?

These are observations upon the state of morals and religion, as we see them in the world: but whatever these observations be, it is still true, and this is Saint John's assertion, that the proper, natural, and genuine effect of religious hope is to cause us to strive "to purify ourselves, even as he is pure." Saint John strongly fixes our attention, I mean, as he means, such of us as are sincere Christians, upon what we are to be hereafter. This, as to particulars, is veiled from us, as we have observed, by our present nature, but as to generals, as to what is of real importance and concern for us to know (I do not mean but that it might be highly gratifying and satisfactory to know more, but as to what is of the first importance and concern for us to know,) we have a glorious assurance, we have an assurance that we shall undergo a change in our nature infinitely for the better; that when he shall appear glorified as he is, we shall be like him. Then the point is, what we are to do, how we are to act, under this expectation, having this hope, with this prospect placed before our eyes. Saint John tells us, "we are to purify ourselves, even as he is pure."

Now what is the Scriptural meaning of purifying ourselves can be made out thus. The contrary of purity is defilement, that is evident: but our Saviour himself hath told us what the things which defile a man are; and this is the enumeration; evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; and the reason given why these are the real proper defilements of our nature is, that they proceed from within, out of the heart: these evil things come from within, and defile the man. The seat, therefore, of moral defilement, according to our Saviour, is the heart; by which we know, that he always meant the affections and the disposition. The seat, therefore, of moral purity must necessarily be the same; for purity is the reverse of defilement: consequently, to purify ourselves, is to cleanse our hearts from the presence and pollution of sin; of those sins particularly, which reside in, and continue in the heart. This is the purgation intended in our text. This is the task of purgation enjoined upon us.

It is to be noticed, that it goes beyond the mere control of our actions. It adds a further duty, the purifying of our thoughts and affections. Nothing can be more certain, than that it was the design of our Saviour, in the passage here referred to, to direct the attention of his disciples to the heart, to that which is within a man, in contradistinction to that which is external. Now he who only strives to control his outward actions, but lets his thoughts and passions indulge themselves without check or restraint, does not attend to that which is within him, in contradistinction to that which is external. Secondly, the instances which our Saviour has given, though, like all instances in Scripture, and to say the truth, in all ancient writings, they be specimens and illustrations of his meaning, as to the kind and nature of the duties or the vices which he had in view, rather than complete catalogues, including all such duties or vices by name, so that no other but what are thus named and specified were intended: though this qualified way of understanding the enumerations be right, yet even this enumeration itself shows, that our Saviour's lesson went beyond the mere external action. Not only are adulteries and fornications mentioned, but evil thoughts and lasciviousness; not only murders, but an evil eye; not only thefts, but covetousness or covetings. Thus by laying the axe to the root; not by lopping off the branches, but by laying the axe to the root, our Saviour fixed the only rule which can ever produce good morals.

Merely controlling the actions, without governing the thoughts and affections, will not do. In point of fact it is never successful. It is certainly not a compliance with our Saviour's command, nor is it what St. John meant in the text by purifying ourselves.

"Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he," namely, Christ himself, "is pure." It is a doctrine and lesson of the New Testament, not once, but repeatedly, inculcated, that if we hope to resemble Christ in his glorified state, we must resemble him in his human state. And it is a part, and a most significant part, of this doctrine, that the resemblance must consist in purity from sin, especially from those sins which cleave and attach to the heart. It is by Saint Paul usually put thus: "If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." "Dead with Christ;" what can that mean? for the apostle speaks to those who had not yet undergone natural death. He explains: "Reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin;" that, you hear, is the death he means. "He that is dead, is freed from sin;" that is Saint Paul's own exposition of his own words; and then, keeping the sense of the words in his thoughts, he adds; "if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." Again, still keeping the same sense in view, and no other sense: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Once more, but still observe in the same sense, "We are buried with him by baptism unto death; our old man is crucified with him." The burden of the whole passage is, that if we hope to resemble what Christ is in heaven, we must resemble what he was upon earth; and that this resemblance must consist specifically in the radical casting off of our sins. The expressions of the apostle are very strong; "that the body of sin may be destroyed. Let not sin reign in your mortal body; obey it not in the lusts thereof;" not only in its practices, but in its desires. "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

In another epistle, that to the Colossians, Saint Paul speaks of an emancipation from sin, as a virtual rising from the dead, like as Christ rose from the dead. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." In this way is the comparison carried on. And what is the practical exhortation which it suggests? "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, evil concupiscence, and covetousness:" which is an equivalent exhortation, and drawn from the same premises, as that of the text; "Purify yourselves, even as he is pure."

The Scriptures then teach, that we are to make ourselves like Christ upon earth, that we may become like him in heaven, and this likeness is to consist in purity.

Now there are a class of Christians, and I am ready to allow, real Christians, to whom this admonition of the text is peculiarly necessary.

They are not those who set aside religion; they are not those who disregard the will of their Maker, but they are those who endeavour to obey him partially, and in this way: finding it an easier thing to do good than to expel their sins, especially those which cleave to their hearts, their affections, or their imaginations, they set their endeavours more towards beneficence than purity. You say we ought not to speak disparagingly of doing good: by no means; but we affirm, that it is not the whole of our duty, nor the most difficult part of it; in particular, it is not that part of it which is insisted upon in the text, and in those other Scriptures that have been mentioned. The text, enjoining the imitation of Christ upon earth, in order that we may become like him in heaven, does not say, do good even as he went about doing good, but it says; "purify yourselves even as he is pure:" so saith Saint John. "Mortify the deeds of the body, let not sin reign in you; die with Christ unto sin; be baptized unto Jesus Christ, that is, unto his death; be buried with him by baptism unto death; be planted together in the likeness of his death; crucify the old man, and destroy the body of sin; as death hath no more dominion over him, so let sin no more reign in your mortal bodies:" so Saint Paul. All these strong and significant metaphors are for the purpose of impressing more forcibly upon us this great lesson; that to participate with Christ in his glory, we must participate with him in his humiliation; and that this participation consists in divesting ourselves of those sins, of the heart especially, and affections, whether they break out into action or not, which are inconsistent with that purity, of which he left us an example; and to the attainment and preservation of which purity, we are most solemnly enjoined to direct our first, strongest, and our most sincere endeavours.

SERMON VII.

OF THE DOCTRINE OF CONVERSION.

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.—Matthew ix. 13.

It appears from these words, that our Saviour in his preaching held in view the character and spiritual situation of the persons whom he addressed; and the differences which existed amongst men in these respects: and that he had a regard to these considerations, more especially in the preaching of repentance and conversion. Now I think, that these considerations have been too much omitted by preachers of the Gospel since, particularly in this very article; and that the doctrine itself has suffered by such omission.

It has been usual to divide all mankind into two classes, the converted and the unconverted; and, by so dividing them, to infer the necessity of conversion to every person whatever. In proposing the subject under this form, we state the distinction, in my opinion, too absolutely, and draw from it a conclusion too universal: because there is a class and description of Christians, who, having been piously educated, and having persevered in those pious courses into which they were first brought, are not conscious to themselves of ever having been without the influence of religion, of ever having lost sight of its sanctions, of ever having renounced them; of ever, in the general course of their conduct, having gone against them. These cannot properly be reckoned either converted or unconverted. They are not converted, for they are not sensible of any such religious alteration having taken place with them, at any particular time, as can properly be called a conversion. They are not unconverted, because that implies a state of reprobation, and because, if we call upon them to be converted, (which if they be unconverted we ought to do,) they will not well understand what it is we mean them to do; and, instead of being edified, they may be both much and unnecessarily disturbed, by being so called upon.

There is, in the nature of things, a great variety of religious condition. It arises from hence, that exhortations, and calls, and admonitions, which are of great use and importance in themselves, and very necessary to be insisted upon, are, nevertheless, not wanted by all, are not equally applicable to all, and to some are altogether inapplicable. This holds true of most of the topics of persuasion or warning, which a Christian teacher can adopt. When we preach against presumption, for instance, it is not because we suppose that all are presumptuous; or that it is necessary for all, or every one, to become more humble, or diffident, or apprehensive than he now is: on the contrary, there may, amongst our hearers, be low, and timorous, and dejected spirits, who, if they take to themselves what we say, may increase a disposition which is already too much; or be at a loss to know what it is herein that he would enjoin upon them. Yet the discourse and the doctrine may, nevertheless, be very good; and for a great portion of our congregation, very necessary. The like, I think, is the case with the doctrine of conversion. If we were to omit the doctrine of conversion, we should omit a doctrine, which, to many, must be the salvation of their souls. To them, all calls without this call, all preaching without this doctrine, would be in vain; and it may be true, that a great part of our hearers are of this description. On the other hand, if we press and insist upon conversion, as indispensable to all for the purpose of being saved, we should mislead some, who would not apprehend how they could be required

to turn, or be converted to religion, who were never, that they knew, either indifferent to it, or alienated from it.

In opposition, however, to what is here said, there are who contend, that it is necessary for every man living to be converted before he can be saved. This opinion undoubtedly deserves serious consideration, because it founds itself upon Scripture, whether rightly or erroneously interpreted is the question. The portion of Scripture upon which they who maintain the opinion chiefly rely, is our Saviour's conversation with Nicodemus, recorded in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel. Our Saviour is there stated to have said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God; and afterwards, as a confirmation, and, in some sort, an exposition, of his assertion, to have added, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." It is inferred from this passage, that *all persons whatever* must undergo a conversion, before they be capable of salvation: and it cannot be said that this is a forced or strained inference: but the question before us at present is, is it a necessary inference? I am not unwilling to admit, that this short, but very remarkable conversation, is fairly interpreted of the gift of the Spirit, and that when this Spirit is given, there is a new birth, a regeneration; but I say, that it is no where determined at what time of life, or under what circumstances, this gift is imparted: nay, the contrary is intimated by comparing it to the blowing of the wind, which, in its mode of action, is out of the reach of our rules and calculation: "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The effect of this uncertainty is, that we are left at liberty to pray for spiritual assistance; and we do pray for it, in all stages, and under all circumstances of our existence. We pray for it in baptism, for those who are baptized; we teach those who are catechised, to pray for it in their catechism: parents pray for its aid and efficacy to give effect to their parental instructions, to preserve the objects of their love and care from sin and wickedness, and from every spiritual enemy: we pray for it, particularly in the office of confirmation, for young persons just entering into the temptations of life. Therefore spiritual assistance may be imparted at any time, from the earliest to the latest period of our existence; and whenever it is imparted, there is that being born of the Spirit to which our Saviour's words refer. And considering the subject as a matter of experience, if we cannot ordinarily distinguish the operations of the Spirit from those of our own minds, it seems to follow, that neither can we distinguish when they commence; so that spiritual assistance may be imparted, and the thing designated by our Lord's discourse satisfied, without such a sensible conversion, that a person can fix his memory upon some great and general change wrought in him at an assignable time.

The consciousness of a great and general change may be the fact with many. It may be essentially necessary to many. I only allege, that it is not so to all, so that every person, who is not conscious of such a change, must set himself down as devoted to perdition.

This, I repeat, is all I contend for; for I by no means intend to say that any one is without sin, and in that sense not to stand in need of conversion; still less, that any sin is to be allowed, and not, on the contrary, strenuously and sincerely resisted and forsaken. I only maintain, that there may be Christians who are, and have been, in such a religious state, that no such thorough and radical change as is usually meant by conversion, is or was necessary for them; and that they need not be made miserable by the want of consciousness of such a change.

I do not, in the smallest degree, mean to undervalue, or speak lightly of such changes, whenever or in whomsoever they take place: nor to deny that they may be sudden, yet lasting, (nay, I am rather inclined to think that it is in this manner that they frequently do take place;) nor to dispute what is upon good testimony alleged concerning conversion brought about by affecting incidents of life; by striking passages of Scripture; by impressive discourses from the pulpit; by what we meet with in books; or even by single touching sentences or expressions in such discourses or books. I am not disposed to question these relations unnecessarily, but rather to bless God for such instances, when I hear of them, and to regard them as merciful ordinations of his providence.

But it will be said, that conversion implies a revolution of opinion. Admitting this to be so, such a change or revolution cannot be necessary to all, because there is no system of religious opinions, in which some have not been brought up from the beginning. To change from error to truth in any great and important article of religious belief, deserves, I allow, the name of conversion; but all cannot be educated in error, on whatever side truth be supposed to lie.

To me, then, it appears, that although it cannot be stated with safety, or without leading to consequences which may confound and alarm many good men, that conversion is necessary to all, and under all circumstances; yet I think, that there are two topics of exhortation, which together comprise the whole Christian life, and one or other of which belongs to every man living, and these two topics are conversion and improvement; when conversion is not wanted, improvement is.

Now this respective preaching of conversion or improvement, according to the respective spiritual condition of those who hear us, or read what we write, is authorised by the example of Scripture preaching, as set forth in the New Testament. It is remarkable, that, in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, we read incessantly of the preaching of repentance, which I admit to mean conversion. Saint John the Baptist's preaching set out with it: our Lord's own preaching set out with it. It was the subject which he charged upon his twelve apostles to preach. It was the subject which he sent forth his seventy disciples to preach. It was the subject which the first missionaries of Christianity pronounced and preached in every place which they came to, in the course of their progress through different countries. Whereas, in the epistles written by the same persons, we hear proportionably much less of repentance, and much more of advance, proficiency, progress, and improvement in holiness of life: and of rules and maxims for the leading of a holy and godly life. These exhortations to continual improvement, to sincere, strenuous, and continual endeavours after improvement, are delivered under a variety of expressions, but with a

strength and earnestness, sufficient to show what the apostles thought of the importance of what they were teaching.

Now the reason of the difference is, that the preaching of Christ and his apostles, as recorded in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles, was addressed to Jews and Gentiles, whom they called upon to become disciples of the new religion. This call evidently implied repentance and conversion. But the epistles, which the apostles, and some of which the same apostles, wrote afterwards, were addressed to persons already become Christians; and to some who, like Timothy, had been such from their earliest youth. Speaking to these, you find, they dwell upon improvement, proficiency, continued endeavours after higher and greater degrees of holiness and purity, instead of saying so much about repentance and conversion. This conduct was highly rational, and was an adaptation of their instruction to the circumstances of the persons whom they addressed, and may be an example to us, in modelling our exhortations to the different spiritual conditions of our hearers.

Seeing, then, that the two great topics of our preaching must always be conversion and improvement; it remains to be considered, who they are to whom we must preach conversion, and who they are to whom we must preach improvement.

First; Now of the persons in our congregations, to whom we not only may, but must, preach the doctrine of conversion plainly and directly, are those who, with the name indeed of Christians, have hitherto passed their lives without any internal religion whatever; who have not at all thought upon the subject; who, a few easy and customary forms excepted, (and which with them are mere forms,) cannot truly say of themselves, that they have done one action which they would not have done equally, if there had been no such thing as a God in the world; or that they have ever sacrificed any passion, any present enjoyment, or even any inclination of their minds, to the restraints and prohibitions of religion; with whom indeed religious motives have not weighed a feather in the scale against interest or pleasure. To these it is utterly necessary that we preach conversion. At this day we have not Jews and Gentiles to preach to; but these persons are really in as unconverted a state as any Jew or Gentile could be in our Saviour's time. They are no more Christians, as to any actual benefit of Christianity to their souls, than the most hardened Jew, or the most profligate Gentile was in the age of the Gospel. As to any difference in the two cases, the difference is all against them. These must be converted, before they can be saved. The course of their thoughts must be changed, the very principles upon which they act must be changed. Considerations, which never, or which hardly ever entered into their minds, must deeply and perpetually engage them. Views and motives, which did not influence them at all, either as checks from doing evil, or as inducements to do good, must become the views and motives which they regularly consult, and by which they are guided: that is to say, there must be a revolution of principle: the visible conduct will follow the change; but there must be a revolution within. A change so entire, so deep, so important as this, I do allow to be a conversion; and no one who is in the situation above described, can be saved without undergoing it; and he must necessarily both be sensible of it at the time, and remember it all his life afterwards. It is too momentous an event ever to be forgot. A man might as easily forget his escape from a shipwreck.—Whether it was sudden, or whether it was gradual, if it was effected, (and the fruits will prove that,) it was a true conversion: and every such person may justly both believe and say of himself, that he was converted at a particular assignable time. It may not be necessary to speak of his conversion, but he will always think of it with unbounded thankfulness to the Giver of all grace, the Author of all mercies, spiritual as well as temporal.

Secondly: The next description of persons, to whom we must preach conversion, properly so called, are those who *allow themselves* in the course and habit of some particular sin. With more or less regularity in other articles of behaviour, there is some particular sin, which they practise constantly and habitually, and allow themselves in that practice. Other sins they strive against; but in this they allow themselves. Now no man can go on in this course, consistently with the hope of salvation. Therefore it must be broken off. The essential and precise difference between a child of God and another is, not so much in the number of sins into which he may fall (though that undoubtedly be a great difference, yet it is not a precise difference; that is to say, a difference, in which an exact line of separation can be drawn,) but the precise difference is, that the true child of God *allows himself* in no sin whatever. Cost what it may, he contends against, he combats, all sin; which he certainly cannot be said to do, who is still in the course and habit of some particular sin; for as to that sin, he reserves it, he compromises it. Against other sins, and other sorts of sin, he may strive; in this he allows himself. If the child of God sin, he does not allow himself in the sin; on the contrary, he grieves, he repents, he rises again; which is a different thing from proceeding in a settled self-allowed course of sinning. Sins which are compatible with sincerity, are much more likely to be objects of God's forgiveness, than sins that are not so; which is the case with allowed sins. Are there then some sins, in which we live continually? some duties, which we continually neglect? we are not children of God; we are not sincere disciples of Christ. The allowed prevalence of any one known sin, is sufficient to exclude us from the character of God's children. And we must be converted from that sin, in order to become such. Here then we must preach conversion. The habitual drunkard, the habitual fornicator, the habitual cheat must be converted. Now such a change of principle, of opinion, and of sentiment, as no longer to allow ourselves in that which we did allow ourselves, and the actual sacrifice of a habit, the breaking off of a course of sinful indulgence, or of unfair gain, in pursuance of the new and serious views which we have formed of these subjects, is a conversion. The breaking off of a habit, especially when we had placed much of our gratification in it, is alone so great a thing, and such a step in our Christian life, as to merit the name of conversion. Then as to the time of our conversion, there can be little question about that. The drunkard was converted, when he left off drinking; the fornicator, when he gave up his criminal indulgences, haunts, and connexions; the

cheat, when he quitted his dishonest practices, however gainful and successful: provided, in these several cases, that religious views and motives influenced the determination, and a religious character accompanied and followed these sacrifices.

In these two cases, therefore, men must be converted, and live; or remain unconverted, and die. And the time of conversion can be ascertained. There must that pass within them, at some particular assignable time, which is properly a conversion; and will, all their lives, be remembered as such. This description, without all doubt, comprehends great numbers; and it is each person's business to settle with himself, whether he be not of the number; if he be, he sees what is to be done.

But I am willing to believe, that there are very many Christians, who neither have in any part of their lives been without influencing principles, nor have at any time been involved in the habit and course of a particular known sin, or have allowed themselves in such course and practice. Sins, without doubt, they have committed, more than sufficient to humble them to the dust; but they have not, to repeat the same words again, lived in a course of any particular known sin, whether of commission or neglect; and by deliberation, and of aforethought, allowed themselves in such course. The *conversion*, therefore, above described, cannot apply to, or be required of, such Christians. To these we must preach, not conversion, but *improvement*. Improvement, continual improvement, must be our text, and our topic; improvement in grace, in piety, in disposition, in virtue. Now, I put the doctrine of *improvement*, not merely upon the consideration, which yet is founded upon express Scripture authority, that, whatever improvement we make in ourselves, we are thereby sure to meliorate our future condition, receiving at the hand of God a proportionable reward for our efforts, our sacrifices, our perseverance, so that our labour is never lost, is never, as Saint Paul expressly assures us, in vain in the Lord; though this, I say, be a firm and established ground to go upon, yet it is not the ground upon which I, at present, place the necessity of a constant progressive improvement in virtue. I rather wish to lay down upon the subject this proposition; namely, that continual improvement is essential in the Christian character, as an evidence of its sincerity; that, if what we have hitherto done in religion has been done from truly religious motives, we shall necessarily *go on;* that, if our religion be real, it cannot stop. There is no standing still: it is not compatible with the nature of the subject: if the principles which actuated us, be principles of godliness, they must continue to actuate us; and, under this continued stimulus and influence, we must necessarily grow better and better. If this effect do not take place, the conclusion is, that our principles are weak, or hollow, or unsound. Unless we find ourselves grow better, we are not right. For example, if our transgressions do not become fewer and fewer, it is to be feared, that we have left off striving against sin, and then we are not sincere.

I apprehend, moreover, that with no man living can there be a ground for stopping, as though there was nothing more left for him to be done. If any man had this reason for stopping, it was the apostle Paul. Yet did he stop? or did he so judge? Hear his own account; "This I do, forgetting those things that are behind, (those things whereunto I have already attained,) and looking forward to those things that are before, (to still further improvement,) I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This was not stopping; it was pressing on. The truth is, in the way of Christian improvement, there is business for the best; there is enough to be done for all.

First: In this stage of the Christian life it is fit to suppose, that there are no enormous crimes, such as mankind universally condemn and cry out against, at present committed by us; yet less faults, still clearly faults, are not unfrequent with us, are too easily excused, too soon repeated. This must be altered.

Secondly: We may not avowedly be engaged in any course or habit of known sin, being at the time conscious of such sin; but we may continue in some practices which our consciences cannot, and would not, upon examination, approve, and in which we have allowed the wrongness of the practice to be screened from our sight by general usage, or by the example of persons of whom we think well. This is not a course to be proceeded in longer. Conscience, our own conscience, is to be our guide in all things.

Thirdly: We may not absolutely *omit* any duty to our families, our station, our neighbourhood, or the public, with which we are acquainted; but might not these duties be more effectively performed, if they were gone about with more diligence than we have hitherto used? and might not further means and opportunities of doing good be found out, if we took sufficient pains to inquire and to consider?

Fourthly, again: Even where less is to be blamed in our lives, much may remain to be set right in our hearts, our tempers, and dispositions. Let our affections grow more and more pure and holy, our hearts more and more lifted up to God, and loosened from this present world; not from its duties, but from its passions, its temptations, its over anxieties, and great selfishness; our souls cleansed from the dross and corruption which they have contracted in their passage through it.

Fifthly: It is no slight work to bring our *tempers* to what they should be; gentle, patient, placable, compassionate; slow to be offended, soon to be appeased; free from envy, which, though a necessary, is a difficult, attainment; free from bursts of anger; from aversions to particular persons, which is hatred; able heartily to rejoice with them that do rejoice; and, from true tenderness of mind, weeping, even when we can do no more, with them that weep; in a word, to put on charity with all those qualities with which Saint Paul hath clothed it, I Cor. xiii. which read for this purpose.

Sixthly: Whilst any good can be done by us, we shall not fail to do it; but even when our powers of active usefulness fail, which not seldom happens, there still remains that last, that highest, that most difficult, and, perhaps, most acceptable, duty, to our Creator, resignation to his blessed will in the privations, and pains, and afflictions, with which we are visited; thankfulness to him for all that is spared to us, amidst much that is gone; for any mitigation of our sufferings, any degree of ease, and comfort, and support, and assistance, which we experience. Every advanced life, every life of sickness or misfortune, affords

materials for virtuous feelings. In a word, I am persuaded, that there is no state whatever of Christian trial, varied and various as it is, in which there will not be found both matter and room for *improvement;* in which a true Christian will not be incessantly striving, month by month, and year by year, to grow sensibly better and better; and in which his endeavours, if sincere, and assisted, as, if sincere, they may hope to be assisted, by God's grace, will not be rewarded with success.

SERMON VIII.

PRAYER IN IMITATION OF CHRIST.

And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.—Luke v. 16.

The imitation of our Saviour is justly held out to us as a rule of life; but then there are many things in which we cannot imitate him. What depends upon his miraculous character must necessarily surpass our endeavours, and be placed out of the reach of our imitation. This reason makes those particulars, in which we *are* able to follow his example, of great importance to be observed by us; because it is to these that our hopes of taking him for our pattern, of treading in his footsteps, are necessarily confined.

Now, our Lord's piety is one of these particulars. We *can*, if we be so minded, pray to God, as he did. We can aim at the spirit, and warmth, and earnestness, of his devotions; we can use, at least, those occasions, and that mode of devotion, which his example points out to us.

It is to be remarked, that a fulness of *mental devotion* was the spring and source of our Lord's visible piety. And this state of mind we must acquire. It consists in this; in a habit of turning our thoughts towards God, whenever they are not taken up with some particular engagement.—Every man has some subject or other, to which his thoughts turn, when they are not particularly occupied. In a good Christian this subject is God, or what appertains to him. A good Christian, walking in his fields, sitting in his chamber, lying upon his bed, is thinking of God. His meditations draw, of their own accord, to that object, and then his thoughts kindle up his devotions; and devotion never burns so bright, or so warm, as when it is lighted up from within. The immensity, the stupendous nature of the adorable Being who made, and who supports, every thing about us, his grace, his love, his condescension towards his reasonable and moral creatures, that is, towards men; the good things which he has placed within our reach, the heavenly happiness which he has put it in our power to obtain; the infinite moment of our acting well and right, so as not to miss of the great reward, and not only to miss of our reward, but to sink into perdition; such reflections will not fail of generating devotion, of moving within us either prayer, or thanksgiving, or both. This is mental devotion. Perhaps the difference between a religious and an irreligious character, depends more upon this mental devotion, than upon any other thing. The difference will show itself in men's lives and conversation, in their dealings with mankind, and in the various duties and offices of their station; but it originates and proceeds from a difference in their internal habits of mind, with respect to God; in the habit of thinking of him in private, and of what relates to him; in cultivating these thoughts, or neglecting them; inviting them, or driving them from us; in forming, or in having formed a habit and custom, as to this point, unobserved and unobservable by others, (because it passes in the mind, which no one can see;) but of the most decisive consequence to our spiritual character and immortal interests. This mind was in Christ: a deep, fixed, and constant piety. The expressions of it we have seen in all the forms, which could bespeak earnestness and sincerity; but the principle itself lay deep in his divine soul; the expressions likewise were occasional, more or fewer, as occasions called, or opportunities offered; but the principle fixed and constant, uninterrupted, unremitted.

But again: Our Lord, whose mental piety was so unquestionable, so ardent, and so unceasing, did not, nevertheless, content himself with that. He thought fit, we find, at sundry times, and I doubt not, also, very frequently, to draw it forth in actual prayer, to clothe it with words, to betake himself to visible devotion, to retire to a mountain for this express purpose, to withdraw himself a short distance from his companions, to kneel down, to pass the whole night in prayer, or in a place devoted to prayer. Let all, who feel their hearts impregnated with religious fervour, remember this example; remember that this disposition of the heart ought to vent itself in actual prayer: let them not either be afraid nor ashamed, nor suffer any person, nor any thing, to keep them from this holy exercise. They will find the devout dispositions of their souls strengthened, gratified, confirmed. This exhortation may not be necessary to the generality of pious tempers; they will naturally follow their propensity, and it will naturally carry them to prayer. But some, even good men, are too abstracted in their way of thinking upon this subject; they think, that since God seeth and regardeth the heart, if their devotion be *there*, if it be within, all outward signs and expressions of it are superfluous. It is enough to answer, that our blessed Lord did not so think. He had all the fulness of devotion in his soul; nevertheless, he thought it not superfluous to utter and pronounce audible prayer to God; and not only so, but to retire and withdraw himself from other engagements; nay, even from his most intimate and favoured companions, expressly for this purpose.

Again: Our Lord's retirement to prayer appears commonly to have followed some signal act and display of his divine powers. He did every thing to the glory of God; he referred his divine powers to his Father's gift; he made them the subject of his thankfulness, inasmuch as they advanced his great work. He followed them by his devotions. Now every good gift cometh down from the Father of light. Whether they be natural, or whether they be supernatural, the faculties which we possess are by God's donation; wherefore, any successful exercise of these faculties, any instance in which we have been capable of doing something good, properly and truly so, either for the community, which is best of all, for our neighbourhood, for our families, nay even for ourselves, ought to stir and awaken our gratitude to God, and to call

forth that gratitude into actual devotion; at least, this is to imitate our blessed Lord, so far as we can imitate him at all: it is adopting into our lives, the principle which regulated his.

Again: It appears, on one occasion at least, that our Lord's retirement to prayer was preparatory to an important work, which he was about to execute. The manner in which Saint Luke states this instance is thus:—"And it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God; and when it was day, he called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." From this statement I infer, that the night, passed by our Lord in prayer, was preparatory to the office which he was about to execute: and surely an important office it was; important to him, important to his religion; important to the whole world. Nor let it be said, that our Lord, after all, in one instance at least, was unfortunate in his choice; of the twelve one was a traitor. That choice was not an error; a remarkable prophecy was to be fulfilled, and other purposes were to be answered, of which we cannot now speak particularly. "I know," says our Lord, "whom I have chosen." But let us confine ourselves to our observation. It was a momentous choice: it was a decision of great consequence; and it was accordingly, on our Lord's part, preceded by prayer; not only so, but by a night spent in prayer. "He continued all night in prayer to God;" or, if you would rather so render it, in a house, set apart for prayer to God. Here, therefore, we have an example given us, which we both *can* imitate, and ought to imitate. Nothing of singular importance; nothing of extraordinary moment, either to ourselves or others, ought to be resolved upon, or undertaken, without prayer to God, without previous devotion. It is a natural operation of piety to carry the mind to God, whenever any thing presses and weighs upon it: they, who feel not this tendency, have reason to accuse and suspect themselves of want of piety. Moreover, we have for it the direct example of our Lord himself: I believe also, I may add, that we have the example and practice of good men, in all ages of the world.

Again: We find our Lord resorting to prayer in his last extremity; and with an earnestness, I had almost said, a vehemence of devotion, proportioned to the occasion. The terms in which the evangelists describe our Lord's devotion in the garden of Gethsemane, the evening preceding his death, are the strongest terms that could be used. As soon as he came to the place, he bid his disciples pray.—When he was at the place, he said unto them, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation." This did not content him: this was not enough for the state and sufferings of his mind. He parted even from them. He withdrew about a stone's-cast, and kneeled down. Hear how his struggle in prayer is described. Three times he came to his disciples, and returned again to prayer; thrice he kneeled down, at a distance from them, repeating the same words. Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: drops of sweat fell from his body, as if it had been great drops of blood; yet in all this, throughout the whole scene, the constant conclusion of his prayer was, "Not my will, but thine be done." It was the greatest occasion that ever was: and the earnestness of our Lord's prayer, the devotion of his soul, corresponded with it. Scenes of deep distress await us all. It is in vain to expect to pass through the world without falling into them. We have in our Lord's example, a model for our behaviour, in the most severe and most trying of these occasions: afflicted, yet resigned; grieved and wounded, yet submissive; not insensible of our sufferings, but increasing the ardour and fervency of our prayer in proportion to the pain and acuteness of our feelings.

But, whatever may be the fortune of our lives, one great extremity, at least, the hour of approaching death, is certainly to be passed through. What ought then to occupy us? what can then support us? Prayer. Prayer, with our blessed Lord himself, was a refuge from the storm; almost every word he uttered, during that tremendous scene, was prayer: prayer the most earnest, the most urgent; repeated, continued, proceeding from the recesses of his soul; private, solitary; prayer for deliverance; prayer for strength; above every thing, prayer for resignation.

SERMON IX.

ON FILIAL PIETY.

And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.—Genesis xlvii. 12.

WHOEVER reads the Bible at all, has read the history of Joseph. It has universally attracted attention: and, without doubt, there is not one, but many points in it, which deserve to be noticed. It is a strong and plain example of the circuitous providence of God: that is to say, of his bringing about the ends and purposes of his providence, by seemingly casual and unsuspected means. That is a high doctrine, both of natural and revealed religion; and is clearly exemplified in this history. It is an useful example, at the same time, of the protection and final reward of virtue, though for a season oppressed and calumniated, or carried through a long series of distresses and misfortunes. I say it is an useful example, if duly understood, and not urged too far. It shows the protection of providence to be *with* virtue under all its difficulties: and this being believed upon good grounds, it is enough; for the virtuous man will be assured that this protection will keep with him *in* and *through* all stages of his existence—living and dying he is in its hands—and for the same reason that it accompanies him, like an invisible guardian, through his trials, it will finally recompence him. This is the true application of that doctrine of a directing providence, which is illustrated by the history of Joseph, as it relates to ourselves—I mean as it relates to those who are looking forward to a future state. If we draw from it an opinion, or an expectation, that, because Joseph was at length rewarded with riches and honours, therefore we shall be the same, we carry the example farther than it will bear. It proves that virtue is under the protection of God, and will ultimately be taken care of and rewarded: but in what manner, and in what stage of our existence, whether in the present or the future, or in both, is left *open* by the example: and both may, and must depend,

upon reasons, in a great measure, unknown to and incalculable by us.

Again: The history of Joseph is a domestic example. It is an example of the ruinous consequences of partiality in a parent, and of the quarrels and contentions in a family, which naturally spring from such partiality.

Again: It is a lesson to all schemers and confederates in guilt, to teach them this truth, that, when their scheme does not succeed, they are sure to quarrel amongst themselves, and to go into the utmost bitterness of mutual accusation and reproach; as the brethren of Joseph you find did.

Again: It is a natural example of the effect of adversity, in bringing men to themselves, to reflections upon their own conduct, to a sense and perception of many things which had gone on, and might have gone on, unthought of and unperceived, if it had not been for some stroke of misfortune, which roused their attention. It was after the brethren of Joseph had been shut up by him in prison, and were alarmed, as they well might be, for their lives, that their consciences, so far as appears, for the first time smote them: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear." This is the natural and true effect of judgments in this world, to bring us to a knowledge of ourselves; that is to say, of those bad things in our lives which have deserved the calamities we are made to suffer.

These are all *points* in the history: but there is another point in Joseph's character, which I make choice of as the subject of my present discourse; and that is his dutifulness and affection to his father. Never was this virtue more strongly displayed. It runs like a thread through the whole narrative; and whether we regard it as a quality to be admired, or, which would be a great deal better, as a quality to be imitated by us, so far as a great disparity of circumstances will allow of imitation, (which in principle it always will do,) it deserves to be considered with a separate and distinct attention.

When a surprising course of events had given to Joseph, after a long series of years, a most unexpected opportunity of seeing his brethren in Egypt, the first question which he asked them was, "Is your father yet alive?" This appears from the account, which Reuben gave to Jacob, of the conference which they had held with the great man of the country, whilst neither of them, as yet, suspected who he was. Joseph, you remember, had concealed himself during their first journey, from the knowledge of his brethren; and it was not consistent with his disguise, to be more full and particular, than he was, in his inquiries.

On account of the continuance of the famine in the land, it became necessary for the brethren of Joseph to go a second time into Egypt to seek corn, and a second time to produce themselves before the lord of the country. What had been Joseph's first question on the former visit, was his first question in this, "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? is *he* yet alive? And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive: and they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance."

Hitherto, you observe, all had passed in disguise. The brethren of Joseph knew nothing who they were speaking to; and Joseph was careful to preserve the secret. You will now take notice, how this affected disguise was broken, and how Joseph found himself forced, as it were, from the resolution he had taken, of keeping his brethren in ignorance of his person. He had proposed, you read, to detain Benjamin; the rest, being perplexed beyond measure, and distressed by this proposal, Judah, approaching Joseph, presents a most earnest supplication for the deliverance of the child: offers *himself* to remain Joseph's prisoner or slave, in his brother's place, and, in the conclusion, touches, unknowingly, upon a string, which vibrates with all the affections of the person whom he was addressing. "How shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father." The mention of this circumstance, and this person, subdued immediately the heart of Joseph, and produced a sudden, and, as it should seem, an undesigned, and premature discovery of himself, to his astonished family. Then, that is, upon this circumstance being mentioned, Joseph could not refrain himself; and after a little preparation, Joseph said unto his brethren, "I am Joseph."

The great secret being now disclosed, what was the conversation which immediately followed? The next word from Joseph's mouth was, "Doth my father yet live?" and his brethren could not answer him; surprise had overcome their faculty of utterance. After comforting, however, and encouraging his brethren, who seemed to sink under the intelligence, Joseph proceeds, "Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, and there will I nourish thee, (for yet there are five years of famine,) lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen: and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither."

It is well known that Jacob yielded to this invitation, and passed over with his family into Egypt.

The next thing to be attended to, is the reception which he there met with from his recovered son. "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen; and presented himself unto him, and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face; because thou art yet alive." Not content with these strong expressions of personal duty and respect, Joseph now availed himself of his power and station to fix his father's family in the enjoyment of those comforts and advantages, which the land of Egypt afforded in the universal dearth which then oppressed that region of the world. For this purpose, as well as to give another public token to his family, and to the country, of the deep reverence with which he regarded his parent, he introduced the aged Patriarch to Pharaoh himself. "And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh." The sovereign of Egypt received a benediction from this venerable stranger. "And Joseph (the account proceeds) nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread according to their families."

It remains to be seen how Joseph conducted himself towards his father, on the two occasions,

in which alone it was left for him to discharge the office, and testify the affection of a son; in his sickness, and upon his death. "And it came to pass," we read, "after these things, one told Joseph, behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim." Joseph delayed not, you find, to leave the court of Pharaoh, the cares and greatness of his station in it, in order to pay the last visit to his dying parent: and to place before him the hopes of his house and family, in the persons of his two sons. "And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these? And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. (Now the eyes of Israel were dim, so that he could not see.) And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them: and Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face; and, lo! God hath showed me also thy seed. And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth." Nothing can well be more solemn or interesting than this interview; more honourable or consoling to old age; or more expressive of the dignified piety of the best of sons, and the greatest of men.

We now approach the last scene of this eventful history, and the best testimony, which it was possible for Joseph to give, of the love and reverence with which he had never ceased to treat his father, and that was upon the occasion of his death, and the honours which he paid to his memory; honours, vain, no doubt, to the dead, but, so far as they are significations of gratitude or affection, justly deserving of commendation and esteem. "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father; and the physicians embalmed Israel. And the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days. And Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt. And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: and there went up with him both chariots and horsemen; and it was a very great company. And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan; and there they mourned with a great and a very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days."

Thus died, and thus was honoured in his death, the founder of the Jewish nation, who, amidst many mercies, and many visitations, sudden and surprising vicissitudes of afflictions and joy, found it the greatest blessing of his varied and eventful life, that he had been the father of a dutiful and affectionate son.

It has been said, and, as I believe, truly, that there is no virtuous quality belonging to the human character, of which there is not some distinct and eminent example to be found in the Bible; no relation in which we can be placed, no duty which we have to discharge, but that we may observe a pattern for it in the sacred history. Of the duty of children to parents, of a son to his father, maintained under great singularities and variations of fortune, undiminished, nay, rather increased, by absence, by distance, by unexampled success, by remote and foreign connexions, you have seen, in this most ancient of all histories, as conspicuous, and as amiable an instance as can be met with in the records of the world, in the purest, best ages of its existence.

SERMON X.

(PART I.)

TO THINK LESS OF OUR VIRTUES, AND MORE OF OUR SINS.

My sin is ever before me.—Psalm li. 3.

THERE is a propensity in the human mind, very general and very natural, yet at the same time, unfavourable in a high degree to the Christian character; which is, that, when we look back upon our lives, our recollection dwells too much upon our virtues; our sins are not, as they ought to be, before us; we think too much of our good qualities, or good actions, too little of our crimes, our corruptions, our fallings off and declension from God's laws, our defects and weaknesses. These we sink and overlook, in meditating upon our good properties. This, I allow is natural: because, undoubtedly, it is more agreeable to have our minds occupied with the cheering retrospect of virtuous deeds, than with the bitter humiliating remembrance of sins and follies. But, because it is natural, it does not follow that it is good. It may be the bias and inclination of our minds; and yet neither right nor safe. When I say that it is wrong, I mean, that it is not the true Christian disposition: and when I say that it is dangerous, I have a view to its effects upon our salvation.

I say, that it is not the true Christian disposition; for, first, how does it accord with what we read in the Christian Scriptures, whether we consider the precepts, which are found there, applicable to the subject, or the conduct and example of Christian characters?

Now, one precept, and that of Christ himself, you find to be this: "Ye, when ye shall have done all those things, which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." Luke xvii. 10. It is evident, that this strong admonition was intended, by our Saviour, to check in his disciples an over-weening opinion of their own merit. It is a very remarkable passage. I think none throughout the New Testament more so. And the intention, with which the words were spoken, was evidently to check and repel that opinion of merit, which is sure to arise from the habit of fixing our contemplation so much upon our good qualities, and so little upon our bad ones. Yet this habit is natural, and was never prohibited by any teacher, except by our Saviour. With him it was a great fault, by reason of its inconsistency with the favourite principle of his religion, humility. I call humility not only a duty, but a principle. Humble-mindedness is a Christian principle, if there be one; above all, humble-mindedness towards God. The servants, to whom our Lord's expression refers, were to be humble-minded, we may presume, towards one another; but

towards their Lord, the only answer, the only thought, the only sentiment, was to be, "We are unprofitable servants." And who were they, that were instructed by our Lord to bear constantly this reflection about with them? Were they sinners, distinctively so called? Were they grievous, or notorious sinners? Nay, the very contrary; they were persons, "who had done all those things that were commanded them!" This is precisely the description which our Lord gives us of the persons to whom his lesson was directed. Therefore you see, that an opinion of merit is discouraged, even in those who had the best pretensions to entertain it; if any pretensions were good. But an opinion of merit, an over-weening opinion of merit, is sure to grow up in the heart, whenever we accustom ourselves to think much of our virtues, and little of our vices. It is generated, fostered, and cherished, by this train of meditation we have been describing. It cannot be otherwise. And if we would repress it; if we would correct ourselves in this respect; if we would bring ourselves into a capacity of complying with our Saviour's rule, we must alter our turn of thinking; we must reflect more upon our sins, and less upon our virtues. Depend upon it, that we shall view our characters more truly, we shall view them much more safely, when we view them in their defects, and faults, and infirmities, than when we view them only, or principally, on the side of their good qualities; even when these good qualities are real. I suppose, and I have all along supposed, that the good parts of our characters, which, as I contend, too much attract our attention, are, nevertheless, real; and I suppose this, because our Saviour's parable supposes the same.

Another great Christian rule is, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." (Philip. ii. 12.) These significant words "fear and trembling," do not accord with the state of a mind which is all contentment, satisfaction, and self-complacency; and which is brought into that state by the habit of viewing and regarding those good qualities, which a person believes to belong to himself, or those good actions which he remembers to have performed. The precept much better accords with a mind anxious, fearful, and apprehensive; and made so by a sense of sin. But a sense of sin exists not, as it ought to do, in that breast which is in the habit of meditating chiefly upon its virtues. I can very well believe, that two persons of the same character in truth, may, nevertheless, view themselves in very different lights, according as one is accustomed to look chiefly at his good qualities, the other chiefly at his transgressions and imperfections; and I say, that this latter is the disposition for working out salvation agreeably to Saint Paul's rule and method; that is, "with fear and trembling:" the other is not.

But further: There is, upon this subject, a great deal to be learnt from the examples which the New Testament sets before us. Precepts are short, necessarily must be so; take up but little room; and, for that reason, do not always strike with the force, or leave the impression, which they ought to do: but *examples* of character, when the question is concerning character, and what is the proper character, have more weight and body in the consideration, and take up more room in our minds than precepts. Now, from one end of the New Testament to the other, you will find the evangelical character to be *contrition*. You hear little of virtue or righteousness; but you hear perpetually of the forgiveness of sins. With the first Christian teachers, "repent, repent," was the burden of their exhortations; the almost constant sound of their voice. Does not this strain of preaching show, that the preachers wished all who heard them, to think much more of offences than of merits? Nay, further, with respect to themselves, whenever this contemplation of righteousness came in their way, it came in their way only to be renounced, as natural perhaps, and also grateful, to human feelings, but as inconsistent and irreconcilable with the Christian condition. It might do for a heathen, but it was the reverse of every thing that is Christian.

The turn of thought which I am recommending, or rather, which I find it necessary to insist upon, as an essential part of the Christian character, is strongly seen in one particular passage of Saint Paul's writings; namely, in the third chapter to the Philippians: "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." These were points which at that time of day, were thought to be grounds of confidence and exultation. But this train of thought no sooner rises in his mind, than the apostle *checks* it, and turns from it to an anxious view of his own deficiencies. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." These are the words of an anxious man. "Not," then he proceeds, "not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In this passage, you see, that, withdrawing his mind from all notions of perfection, attainment, accomplishment, security, he fixes it upon his deficiencies. Then he tells you, that *forgetting*, that is, expressly putting out of his mind and his thought, the progress and advance which he had already made, he casts his eyes and attention upon those qualities in which he was short and deficient, upon what remained for him yet to do; and this I take to be the true Christian way of proceeding. "Forget those things that are behind;" put out of your thoughts the attainments and progress you have already made, in order to see fully your defects and imperfections.

In another passage, found in a chapter with which all are acquainted, the fifteenth of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, our apostle, having occasion to compare his situation with that of the other apostles, is led to say: "I laboured more abundantly than they all." Saint Paul's labours in the Gospel, labours which consumed his whole life, were surely what he might reflect upon with complacency and satisfaction. If such reflections were proper in any case, they were proper in his. Yet observe how they are checked and qualified. The moment he had said, "I laboured more abundantly than they all," he added, as it were, correcting himself for the expression, "Yet not I, but the

grace of God, which was with me." He magnifies not himself, but the grace of God which was with him. In the next place, you will observe, that, though the consciousness of his labours, painful, indefatigable labours, and meritorious labours, if ever man's were so—I say, that, though the consciousness of these was present to his mind at the time, yet it did not hinder him from feeling, with the deepest abasement and self-degradation, his former offences against Christ, though they were offences which sprang from error. "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God; but, by the grace of God, I am what I am." The faults of his life were uppermost in his mind. No mention, no recollection of his services, even when he did happen to recollect them, shut out even for a single moment, the deep memory of his offences, or covered or concealed it from his view.

In another place, the same apostle, looking back upon the history of his singular and eventful life, exhibits himself to his converts, as how? not as bringing forward his merit, pleading his services, or claiming his reward: but as nothing other, nothing more, than a monument and example of God Almighty's mercy. Sinners need not despair of mercy, when so great a sinner as himself obtained it. Hear his own words: "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting;" 1 Timothy i. 16. What could be more humble or self-depressing than this acknowledgment? yet this was Saint Paul's.

The eleventh chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and also the twelfth, ought to be read by you on this occasion. They are very remarkable chapters, and very much to our present purpose. It had so happened, that some hostile, and, as it should seem, some false teachers, had acquired a considerable influence and ascendancy in the church which Saint Paul had planted. To counteract which influence it became necessary for him to assert his character, to state his pretensions to credit and authority, amongst them at least, and in comparison with those who were leading them astray. He complies with the occasion; and he does, accordingly, set forth and enumerate his pretensions. But I entreat you to observe, with how many apologies, with what reluctance, and under what strong protestations, he does it; showing most manifestly, how contrary it was to his habit, his judgment, and to the inclination of his mind to do so. His expressions are such as these: "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in *my folly;* and, indeed, bear with me." What was his folly? the recital he was about to give of his services and pretensions. —Though compelled by the reason you have heard, to give it, yet he calls it folly to do so. He is interrupted as he proceeds by the same sentiment; "That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but, as it were, foolishly in this confidence of boasting." And again, referring to the necessity, which drew from him this sort of language; "I am become," says he, "a *fool* in glorying; ye have compelled me."

But what forms, perhaps, the strongest part of the example is, that the apostle considers this tendency to boast and glory, though it was in his gifts, rather than his services, as one of his dangers, one of his temptations, one of the propensities which he had both to guard and struggle against, and lastly, an inclination, for which he found an antidote and remedy in the dispensations of Providence towards him. Of his gifts, he says, considering himself as nothing, as entirely passive in the hands of God, "of such a one," of a person to whom such gifts and revelations as these have been imparted, "I will glory; yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." Then he goes on: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."

After what you have heard, you will not wonder, that this same Saint Paul should pronounce himself to be "the chief of sinners."—"Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief;" 1 Tim. i. 15. His sins were uppermost in his thoughts. Other thoughts occasionally visited his mind: but the impression which these had made, was constant, deep, fixed, and indelible.

If, therefore, you would imitate Saint Paul in his turn and train of religious thought; if you would adopt his disposition, his frame, his habit of mind, in this important exercise; you must meditate more upon your sins, and less upon your virtues.

Again; and which is another strong scriptural reason for the advice I am giving, the habit of viewing and contemplating our own virtues has a tendency in opposition to a fundamental duty of our religion, the entertaining of a due and grateful sense of the mercy of God in the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ. The custom of thought, which we dissuade, is sure to generate in us notions of merit; and that, not only in comparison with other men, which is by no means good, or likely to produce any good effect upon our disposition, but also in relation to God himself; whereas the whole of that sentiment, which springs up in the mind, when we regard our characters in comparison with those of other men, if tolerated at all, ought to sink into the lowest self-abasement, when we advance our thoughts to God, and the relation in which we stand to him. Then is all boasting, either in spirit or by words, to be done away. The highest act of faith and obedience, recorded in Scripture, was Abraham's consent to sacrifice his son, when he believed that God required it. It was the severest trial that human nature could be put upon; and, therefore, if any man, who ever lived, were authorized to boast of his obedience, it was Abraham after this experiment. Yet what says Saint Paul? "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; *but not before God.*" No man's pretensions to glory were greater, yet, before God, they were nothing. "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, lest any man should boast;" Eph. ii. 8, 9. Here you perceive distinctly, that speaking of salvation, with reference to its cause, it is by grace; it is an act of pure favour; it is not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; it is not of works; and that this representation was given, lest any man should boast, that is, expressly for the purpose of beating down and humbling all sentiments of merit or desert in what we do; lest they induce us, as they will induce us, to think less gratefully, or less piously,

of God's exceeding love and kindness towards us. There is no proportion between even our best services and that reward which God hath in reserve for them that love him. Why then are such services to be so rewarded? It is the grace of God; it is the riches of his grace; in other words, his abounding kindness and favour; it is his love; it is his mercy. In this manner the subject is constantly represented in Scripture; and it is an article of the Christian religion. And to possess our minds with a sense, an adequate sense, so far as it is possible to do so, of this truth, is a duty of the religion. But to be ruminating and meditating upon our virtues, is not the way to acquire that sense. Such meditations breed opinions of merit and desert; of presumption, of pride, of superciliousness, of self-complacency; tempers of mind, in a word, not only incompatible with humility, but also incompatible with that sense of divine love and mercy towards us, which lies at the root of all true religion, is the source and fountain of all true piety.

You have probably heard of the term self-righteousness: you find it much in the writings and discourses of a particular class of Christians, and always accompanied with strong and severe expressions of censure and reprobation. If the term mean the habit of contemplating our virtues, and not our vices; or a strong leaning and inclination thereto, I agree with those Christians in thinking, that it is a disposition, a turn of mind to be strongly resisted, and restrained, and repressed. If the term mean any other way of viewing our own character, so as to diminish or lower our sense of God Almighty's goodness and mercy towards us, in making us the tender of a heavenly reward, then also I agree with them in condemning it, both as erroneous in its principle, and highly dangerous in its effects. If the term mean something more than, or different from what is here stated, and what has been enlarged upon in this discourse, then I profess myself not to understand its meaning.

SERMON XI.

(PART II.)

TO THINK LESS OF OUR VIRTUES, AND MORE OF OUR SINS.

My sin is ever before me.—Psalm li. 3.

To think well is the way to act rightly; because thought is the source and spring of action. When the course and habit of thinking is wrong, the root is corrupt; "and a corrupt tree bringeth not forth good fruit:" Do what you will, if the root be corrupt, the fruit will be corrupt also. It is not only true, that different actions will proceed from different trains of thought; but it is also true, that the same actions, the same external conduct, may be very different in the sight of God, according as it proceeds from a right, or a wrong, a more or less proper principle and motive, a more or less proper disposition. Such importance is attached to the disposition; of such great consequence is it, that our disposition in religious matters be what it should be. By disposition is meant, the bent or tendency of our inclinations; and by disposition is also meant, the train and habit of our thoughts, two things which are always nearly connected. It is the latter sense, however, in which I use the word; and the particular lesson which I am inculcating, for the conduct of our thoughts, is to think more of our sins, and less of our virtues. In a former discourse, I showed, that there are strong and positive Scripture precepts, a due regard to which accords with the state of mind of him who fixes his attention upon his sins and defects, and by no means with his state of mind, who hath fixed his attention chiefly upon his virtues: Secondly, That Scripture examples, that of Saint Paul most particularly, teach us to *renounce* the thoughts of our virtues, and to entertain deeply and constantly the thoughts of our sins: Thirdly, That the habit here reproved, is inconsistent with a due sense of the love of God in the redemption of the world. I am now to offer such further reasons as appear to support the rule I have laid down.

And, first, There is no occasion whatever to meditate upon our virtues and good qualities. We may leave them to themselves. We need not fear that they will either be forgotten or undervalued. "God is not unrighteous to forget your works and labour of love:" Hebrews vi. 10. He will remember them; we need not. They are set down in his book; not a particle will be lost. Blessed are they who have much there; but we need not count them up in our recollection; for, whatever our virtues are or were, we cannot make them better by thinking of them afterwards. We may make them better in future by thinking of their imperfections, and by endeavouring to encounter, to lessen, or remove those imperfections hereafter; but then this is to think, not upon our virtues, but upon our imperfections. Thinking upon our virtues, as such, has no tendency to make them better, be they what they will. But it is not the same with our sins. Thinking upon these afterwards may make a very great alteration in them, because it may lead to an effectual repentance. As to the act itself, what is past cannot be recalled; what is done cannot be undone: the mischief may possibly be irrevocable and irreparable. But as to the sin, it is different. Deep, true, sincere penitence may, through the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, do away that. And such penitence may be the fruit of meditation upon our sins; cannot possibly come without it. Nay, the act itself may be altered. It is not always that an injury is irreparable. Wrong indeed has been received at our hands; but restitution or compensation may be in our power. When they are so, they are the surest proofs of penitence. No penitence is sincere without them, if they be practicable. This benefit to those whom we have injured, and an infinitely greater benefit to ourselves than to them, may be the effect of seeing our sins in their true light, which that man never does, who thinks only, or chiefly, or habitually, upon his virtues. Can a better reason be given for meditating more upon our sins, and less upon our virtues, than this; that one train of thought may be profitable to salvation, the other is profitable for nothing?

It is an exceedingly good observation, that we may safely leave our virtues and good qualities to themselves. And, besides the use we have made of it in showing the superfluity, as well as the danger of giving in to the contemplation of our

virtues, it is also a quieting and consoling reflection for a different, and, in some degree, an opposite description of character, that is to say, for tender and timorous consciences. Such are sometimes troubled with doubts and scruples about even their good actions. Virtue was too easy for them, or too difficult; too easy and pleasant to have any merit in it: or difficult by reason of fleshy, selfish, or depraved propensities, still existing unsubdued, still struggling in their unregenerated hearts. These are natural, and, as I have sometimes known them, very distressing scruples. I think that observations might be offered to remove the ground of them altogether: but what I have at present to suggest is, that the very act of reflection, which leads to them, is unnecessary, provided you will proceed by our rule, *viz.* to leave your virtues, such as they are, to themselves; and to bend the whole force of your thought towards your sins, towards the conquest of these.

But it will be said, are we not to taste the comforts of religion? Are we not to be permitted, or rather ought we not to be encouraged, to relish, to indulge, to enjoy these comforts? And can this be done without meditating upon our good actions.

I answer, that this can be done without meditating upon our good actions. We need not seek the comforts of religion in this way. Much we need not *seek* them at all; they will visit us of their own accord, if we be serious and hearty in our religion. A well-spent life will impart its support to the spirits, without any endeavour, on our part, to call up our merits to our view, or even allowing the idea of merit to take possession of our minds. There will, in this respect, always be as much difference as there ought to be, between the righteous man and the sinner, (or, to speak more properly, between sinners of different degrees,) without taking pains to draw forth in our recollection instances of our virtue, or to institute a comparison between ourselves and others, or certain others of our acquaintance. These are habits, which I hold to be unchristian and wrong; and that the true way of finding and feeling the consolations of religion, is by progressively conquering our sins. Think of these; contend with these, and, if you contend with sincerity, and with effect, which is the proof indeed of sincerity, I will answer for the comforts of religion being your portion. What is it that disturbs our religious tranquillity? What is it that embitters or impairs our religious comfort, damps and checks our religious hopes, hinders us from relishing and entertaining these ideas, from turning to them, as a supply of consolation under all circumstances? What is it but our sins? Depend upon it, that it is sin, and nothing else, which spoils our religious comfort. Cleanse your heart from sin, and religion will enter in, with all her train of hopes and consolations. For proof of this, we may, as before, refer to the examples of Scripture Christians. They rejoiced in the Lord continually. "The joy of faith," Phil. i. 25. "Joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17, was the word in their mouths, the sentiment of their hearts. They spake of their religion as of a strong consolation, as of the "refuge to which they had fled, as of the hope of which they had laid hold, of an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast:" Heb. vi. 18, 19. Their promise from the Lord Jesus Christ was, "Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you:" John xvi. 22. Was this promise fulfilled to them? Read Acts xiii. 52: "They were filled with joy and the Holy Ghost." "The kingdom of God," saith Saint Paul, "is joy in the Holy Ghost:" Rom. xiv. 17. So that St. Paul, you hear, takes his very description and definition of Christianity from the joy which is diffused over the heart; and St. Paul, I am very confident, described nothing but what he felt. Yet St. Paul did not meditate upon his virtues: nay, expressly renounced that sort of meditation. His meditations, on the contrary, were fixed upon his own unworthiness, and upon the exceeding, stupendous mercy of God towards him, through Jesus Christ his Saviour. At least, we have his own authority for saying, that, in his Christian progress, he never looked back; he forgot that which was behind, whatever it might be, which he had already attained; he refused to remember it, he put it out of his thoughts. Yet, upon this topic of religious joy, hear him again: "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" Rom. v. 11; and once more, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace:" Gal. v. 22. These last are three memorable words, and they describe, not the effects of ruminating upon a man's own virtues, but the fruit of the Spirit.

But it is not in one apostle in whom we find this temper of mind, it is in them all. Speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, St. Peter thus addresses his converts: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:" 1 Peter i. 8. This joy covered even their persecutions and sufferings: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now, for a season if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations," 1 Peter i. 6, meaning persecutions. In like manner St. James saith, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, that is, persecutions;" and why? "knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience:" James i. 2, 3. Let no one, after these quotations, say, that it is necessary to fix our attention upon the virtues of our character in order to taste the comforts of religion. No persons enjoyed these comforts in so great perfection as the Christians whom we read of in Scripture, yet no persons thought so little of their own virtues. What they continually thought upon was the abounding love of Christ towards them, "in that, whilst they were yet sinners, he died for them," and the tender and exceeding mercies of God in the pardon of their sins, through Christ. From this they drew their consolation; but the ground and origin of this train of thought was, not the contemplation of virtue, but the conviction of sin.

But again: The custom of viewing our virtue, has a strong tendency to fill us with fallacious notions of our own state and condition. One almost constant deception is this, *viz.* that in whatever quality we have pretensions, or believe that we have pretensions to excel, that quality we place at the head of all other virtues. If we be charitable, then "charity covereth a multitude of sins." If we be strictly honest, then strict honesty is no less than the bond which keeps society together; and consequently, is that without which other virtues would have no worth, or rather no existence. If we be temperate and chaste, then self-government being the hardest of all duties, is

the surest test of obedience. Now every one of these propositions is true; but the misfortune is, that only one of them is thought of at the time, and that the one which favours our own particular case and character. The comparison of different virtues, as to their price and value, may give occasion to many nice questions; and some rules might be laid down upon the subject; but I contend that the practice itself is useless, and not only useless but delusive. Let us leave, as I have already said, our virtues to themselves, not engaging our minds in appreciating either their intrinsic or comparative value; being assured that they will be weighed in unerring scales. Our business is with our sins.

Again: The habit of contemplating our spiritual acquirements, our religious or moral excellencies, has, very usually, and, I think, almost unavoidably, an unfavourable effect upon our disposition towards other men. A man who is continually computing his riches, almost in spite of himself, grows proud of his wealth. A man who accustoms himself to read and inquire, and think a great deal about his family, becomes vain of his extraction: he can hardly help becoming so. A man who has his titles sounding in his ears, or his state much before his eyes, is lifted up by his rank. These are effects which every one observes; and no inconsiderable degree of the same effect springs from the habit of meditating upon our virtues. Now humble-mindedness is a Christian duty, if there be one. It is more than a duty; it is a principle. It is a principle of the religion; and its influence is exceedingly great, not only upon our religious, but our social character. They who are truly humble-minded, have no quarrels, give no offence, contend with no one in wrath and bitterness; still more impossible is it for them to *insult* any man under any circumstances. But the way to be humble-minded is the way I am pointing out, *viz.* to think less of our virtues, and more of our sins. In reading the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, if we could suppose them to be real characters, I should say of them, that the one had just come from ruminating upon his virtues, the other from meditating upon his sins. And mark the difference; first, in their behaviour; next, in their acceptance with God. The pharisee all loftiness, and contemptuousness, and recital, and comparison, full of ideas of merit, views the poor publican, although withdrawn to a distance from him, with eyes of scorn. The publican, on the contrary, enters not into competition with the pharisee, or with any one. So far from looking round, he durst not so much as *lift up* his eyes; but casts himself, hardly indeed presumes to cast himself, not upon the justice, but wholly and solely upon the mercies of his Maker: "God be merciful to me a sinner." We know the judgment which our Lord himself pronounced upon the case: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other:" Luke xviii. 14. The more, therefore, we are like the publican, and the less we are like the pharisee, the more we come up to the genuine temper of Christ's religion.

Think, then, less of your virtues; more of your sins. Do I hear any one answer, I have no sins to think upon; I have no crimes which lie upon my conscience: I reply, that this may be true with respect to some, nay, with respect to many persons, according to the idea we commonly annex to the words, sins and crimes; meaning thereby acts of gross and external wickedness. But think further; enlarge your views. Is your obedience to the law of God what it ought to be, or what it might be? The first commandment of that law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Is there, upon the subject of this commandment, no matter for thought, no room for amendment? The second commandment is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Is all with us as it should be here? Again, there is a spirituality in the commands of Christ's religion, which will cause the man who obeys them truly, not only to govern his actions, but his words: not only his words, but his inclinations and his dispositions, his internal habits, as well as his external life. "Ye have heard that it hath been said of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, He that looketh on a woman to lust after her," that is, he who voluntarily indulges and entertains in his mind an unlawful desire, "hath committed adultery with her already in his heart," is by the very entertainment of such ideas, instead of striving honestly and resolutely to banish them from his mind, or to take his mind off from them, a sinner in the sight of God. Much the same kind of exposition belongs to the other commandments; not only is murder forbidden, but all unreasonable intemperate anger and passion; not only stealing, but all hard and unfair conduct, either in transacting business with those who are upon a level with us, or, where it is more to be feared, towards those who are in our power. And do not these points open to us a field of inquiry, how far we are concerned in them? There may not be what, strictly speaking, can be called an act or deed, which is scandalously bad; yet the current of our imaginations, the bent of our tempers, the stream of our affections, may all, or any of them, be wrong, and may be requiring, even at the peril of our salvation, stronger control, a better direction.

Again: There may not be any action which, singly and separately taken, amounts to what would be reckoned a crime: yet there may be actions, which we give into, which even our own consciences cannot approve; and these may be so frequent with us, as to form a part of the course and fashion of our lives.

Again: It is possible, that some of the miscarriages in conduct, of which we have to accuse ourselves, may be imputable to inadvertency or surprise. But could these miscarriages happen so often as they do, if we exercised that vigilance in our Christian course, which not only forms a part of the Christian character, but is a sure effect of a sincere faith in religion, and a corresponding solicitude and concern about it? Lastly, uprofitableness itself is a sin. We need not do mischief in order to commit sin; uselessness, when we might be useful, is enough to make us sinners before God. The fig-tree in the Gospel was cut down, not because it bore sour fruit, but because it bore none. The parable of the talents (Matt. xxv. 14.) is pointed expressly against the simple neglect of faculties and opportunities of doing good, as contradistinguished from the perpetration of positive crimes. Are not all these topics fit matters of meditation, in the review of our lives? Upon the whole, when I hear a person say he has no sins to think upon, I conclude that he

has not thought seriously concerning religion at all.

Let our sins, then, be ever before us; if not our crimes, of which it is possible that, according to the common acceptation of that word, we may not have many to remember; let our omissions, deficiencies, failures, our irregularities of heart and affection, our vices of temper and disposition, our course and habit of giving into smaller offences, meaning, as I do mean, by offences, all those things which our consciences cannot really approve; our slips, and inadvertencies and surprises, much too frequent for a man in earnest about salvation: let these things occupy our attention; let this be the bent and direction of our thoughts: for they are the thoughts which will bring us to God evangelically; because they are the thoughts which will not only increase our vigilance, but which must inspire us with that humility as to ourselves, with that deep, and abiding, and operating sense of God Almighty's love and kindness and mercy towards us, in and through Jesus Christ our Saviour, which it was one great aim and end of the Gospel, and of those who preached it, to inculcate upon all who came to take hold of the offer of grace.

SERMON XII.

SALVATION FOR PENITENT SINNERS.

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.—Luke vii. 47.

It has been thought an extravagant doctrine, that the greatest sinners were sometimes nearer to the kingdom of heaven than they whose offences were less exorbitant, and less conspicuous: yet I apprehend, the doctrine wants only to be rationally explained, to show that it has both a great deal of truth, and a great deal of use in it; that it may be an awakening religious proposition to some, whilst it cannot, without being wilfully misconstrued, delude or deceive any.

Of all conditions in the world, the most to be despaired of, is the condition of those who are altogether insensible and unconcerned about religion; and yet they may be, in the mean time, tolerably regular in their outward behaviour; there may be nothing in it to give great offence; their character may be fair; they may pass with the common stream, or they may even be well spoken of; nevertheless, I say, that, whilst this insensibility remains upon their minds, their condition is more to be despaired of than that of any other person. The religion of Christ does not in any way apply to them: they do not belong to it; for are they to be saved by performing God's will? God is not in their thoughts; his will is not before their eyes. They may do good things, but it is not from a principle of obedience to God that they do them. There may be many crimes which they are not guilty of; but it is not out of regard to the will of God that they do not commit them. It does not, therefore, appear, what just hopes they can entertain of heaven, upon the score of an obedience which they not only do not perform, but do not attempt to perform. Then, secondly, if they are to hope in Christ for a forgiveness of their imperfections, for acceptance through *him*, of broken and deficient services, the truth is, they have recourse to no such hope; besides, it is not imperfection with which they are charged, but a total absence of principle. A man who never strives to obey, never indeed bears that thought about him, must not talk of the imperfection of his obedience: neither the word, nor the idea, pertains to him; nor can *he* speak of broken and deficient services, who in no true sense of the term hath ever served God at all. I own, therefore, I do not perceive what rational hopes religion can hold out to insensibility and unconcernedness; to those who neither obey its rules, nor seek its aid: neither follow after its rewards, nor sue, I mean, in spirit and sincerity, sue, for its pardon. But how, it will be asked, can a man be of regular and reputable morals, with this religious insensibility: in other words, with the want of vital religion in his heart? I answer, that it can be. A general regard to character, knowing that it is an advantageous thing to possess a good character; or a regard generated by natural and early habit; a disposition to follow the usages of life, which are practised around us, and which constitute decency; calm passions, easy circumstances, orderly companions, may, in a multitude of instances, keep men within rules and bounds, without the operation of any religious principle whatever.

There is likewise another cause, which has a tendency to shut out religion from the mind, and yet hath at the same time a tendency to make men orderly and decent in their conduct: and that cause is business. A close attention to business is very apt to exclude all other attentions; especially those of a spiritual nature, which appear to men of business shadowy and unsubstantial, and to want that present reality and advantage which they have been accustomed to look for and to find in their temporal concerns; and yet it is undoubtedly true, that attention to business frequently and naturally produces regular manners. Here, therefore, is a case, in which decency of behaviour shall subsist along with religious insensibility, forasmuch as one cause produces both—an intense application to business.

Decency, order, regularity, industry, application to our calling, are all good things; but then they are accompanied with this great danger, *viz.* that they may subsist without any religious influence whatever; and that, when they do so, their tendency is to settle and confirm men in religious insensibility. For finding things go on very smoothly, finding themselves received and respected without any religious principle, they are kept asleep, as to their spiritual concerns, by the very quietness and prosperity of things around them. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." It is possible to slumber in a fancied security, or rather in an unconsciousness of danger, a blindness to our true situation, a thoughtlessness or stupefaction concerning it, even at the time when we are in the utmost peril of salvation; when we are descending fast towards a state of perdition. It is not the judgment of an erroneous conscience: that is not the case I mean. It is rather a want of conscience, or a conscience which is never exerted; in a word, it is an indifference and insensibility concerning religion, even in the midst of seeming and external decency of behaviour, and soothed and lulled by this very circumstance.

Now it is not only within the compass of possibility, but it frequently, nay, I hope, it very frequently comes to pass, that open, confessed, acknowledged sins, sting the sinner's conscience: that the upbraidings of mankind, the cry, the clamour, the indignation, which his wickedness has excited, may at length come home to his own soul; may compel him to reflect, may bring him, though by force and violence, to a sense of his guilt, and a knowledge of his situation. Now I say, that this sense of sin, by whatever cause it be produced, is better than religious insensibility. The sinner's penitence is more to be trusted to than the seemingly righteous man's security. The one is roused; is roused from the deep forgetfulness of religion in which he had hitherto lived. Good fruit, even fruit unto life everlasting, may spring from the motion which is stirred in his heart. The other remains, as to religion, in a state of torpor. The thing wanted, as the quickening principle, as the seed and germ of religion in the heart, is compunction, convincement of sin, of danger, of the necessity of flying to the Redeemer and to his religion in good earnest. "They were pricked in their heart, and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" This was the state of mind of those who first heard the Gospel: and this is the state of mind still to be brought about before the Gospel be heard with effect. And sin will sometimes do it, when outward righteousness will not; I mean by outward righteousness, external decency of manners, without any inward principle of religion whatever. The sinner may return and fly to God, even because the world is against him. The visibly righteous man is in friendship with the world: and the "friendship of the world is enmity with God," whensoever, as I have before expressed it, it soothes and lulls men in religious insensibility.

But how, it will be said, is this? Is it not to encourage sin? Is it not to put the sinner in a more hopeful condition than the righteous? Is it not, in some measure, giving the greatest sinner the greatest chance of being saved? This may be objected; and the objection brings me to support the assertion in the beginning of my discourse, that the doctrine proposed cannot, without being wilfully misconstrued, deceive or delude any. First, you ask, is not this to encourage sin? I answer, it is to encourage the sinner who repents; and, if the sinner repent, why should he not be encouraged? But some, you say, will take occasion, from this encouragement, to plunge into sin. I answer, that then they wilfully misapply it: for if they enter upon sin intending to repent afterwards, I take upon me to tell them, that no true repentance can come of such intention. The very intention is a fraud: instead of being the parent of true repentance, it is itself to be repented of bitterly. Whether such a man ever repent or not is another question, but no sincere repentance can issue or proceed from this intention. It must come altogether from another quarter. It will look back, when it does come, upon that previous intention with hatred and horror, as upon a plan, and scheme, and design to impose upon and abuse the mercy of God. The moment a plan is formed of sinning with an intention afterwards to repent, at that moment the whole doctrine of grace, of repentance, and of course this part of it amongst the rest, is wilfully misconstrued. The grace of God is turned into lasciviousness. At the time this design is formed, the person forming it is in the bond of iniquity, as St. Peter told Simon he was; in a state of eminent perdition; and this design will not help him out of it. We say that repentance is sometimes more likely to be brought about in a confessed, nay, notorious and convicted sinner, than in a seemingly regular life: but it is of true repentance that we speak, and no true repentance can proceed from a previous intention to repent, I mean an intention previous to the sin. Therefore no advantage can be taken of this doctrine to the encouragement of sin, without wilfully misconstruing it.

But then you say, we place the sinner in a more hopeful condition than the righteous. But who, let us inquire, are the righteous we speak of? Not they, who are endeavouring, however imperfectly, to perform the will of God; not they, who are actuated by a principle of obedience to him; but men who are orderly and regular in their visible behaviour without an internal religion. To the eye of man they appear righteous. But if they do good, it is not from the love or fear of God, or out of regard to religion that they do it, but from other considerations. If they abstain from sin, they abstain from it out of different motives from what religion offers; and so long as they have the acquiescence and approbation of the world, they are kept in a state of sleep; in a state, as to religion, of total negligence and unconcern. Of these righteous men there are many; and, when we compare their condition with that of the open sinner, it is to rouse them, if possible, to a sense of religion. A wounded conscience is better than a conscience which is torpid. When conscience begins to do its office, they will feel things changed within them mightily. It will no longer be their concern to keep fair with the world, to preserve appearances, to maintain a character, to uphold decency, order, and regularity in their behaviour; but it will be their concern to obey God, to think of him, to love him, to fear him; nay, to love him with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, with all their strength; that is, to direct their cares and endeavours to one single point, his will; yet their visible conduct may not be much altered; but their internal motives and principle will be altered altogether.

This alteration must take place in the heart, even of the seemingly righteous. It may take place also in the heart of the sinner; and, we say, (and this is, in truth, the whole which we say,) that a conscience pricked by sin is sometimes, nay oftentimes, more susceptible of the impressions of religion, of true and deep impressions, than a mind which has been accustomed to look only to the laws and customs of the world, to conform itself to those laws, and to find rest and satisfaction in that peace, which not God, but the world gives.

SERMON XIII.

SINS OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN.

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the father

upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.–Exodus xx. 5.

THESE words form part of the second commandment. It need not be denied, that there is an apparent harshness in this declaration, with which the minds even of good and pious men have been sometimes sensibly affected. To visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, even to the third and fourth generation, is not, at first sight, at least, so reconcileable to our apprehensions of justice and equity, as that we should expect to find it in a solemn publication of the will of God.

I think, however, that a fair and candid interpretation of the words before us will remove a great deal of the difficulty, and of the objection which lies against them. My exposition of the passage is contained in these four articles:—First, that the denunciation and sentence relate to the sin of idolatry in particular, if not to that alone. Secondly, That it relates to temporal, or, more properly speaking, to family prosperity and adversity. Thirdly, That it relates to the Jewish economy, in that particular administration of a visible providence, under which they lived. Fourthly, that at no rate does it affect, or was ever meant to affect, the acceptance or salvation of individuals in a future life.

First, I say, that the denunciation and sentence relate to the sin of idolatry in particular, if not to that alone. The prohibition of the commandment is pointed against that particular offence, and no other. The first and second commandment may be considered as one, inasmuch as they relate to one subject, or nearly so. For many ages, and by many churches, they were put together, and considered as one commandment. The subject to which they both relate, is false worship, or the worship of false gods. This is the single subject, to which the prohibition of both commandments relates; the single class of sins which is guarded against. Although, therefore, the expression be, "the sins of the fathers," without specifying in that clause what sins, yet in fair construction, and indeed in common construction, we may well suppose it to be that kind and class of sins, for the restraint of which the command was given, and against which its force was directed. The punishment, threatened by any law, must naturally be applied to the offence particularly forbidden by that law, and not to offences in general.

One reason why you may not probably perceive the full weight of what I am saying, is, that we do not at this day understand, or think much concerning the sin of idolatry, or the necessity, or importance of God's delivering a specific, a solemn, a terrifying sentence against it. The sin itself hath in a manner ceased from among us: other sins, God knows, have come in its place; but this, in a great measure, is withdrawn from our observation: whereas in the age of the world, and among those people, when and to whom the ten commandments were promulgated, false worship, or the worship of false gods, was the sin, which lay at the root and foundation of every other. The worship of the one true God, in opposition to the vain, and false, and wicked religions, which had then obtained amongst mankind, was the grand point to be inculcated. It was the contest then carried on; and the then world, as well as future ages, were deeply interested in it. History testifies, experience testifies, that there cannot be true morality, or true virtue, where there is false religion, false worship, false gods; for which reason you find, that this great article (for such it then was) was not only made the subject of a command, but placed at the head of all the rest. Nay, more; from the whole strain and tenor of the Old Testament, there is good reason to believe, that the maintaining in the world the knowledge and worship of the one true God, holy, just, and good, in contradiction to the idolatrous worship which prevailed, was the great and principal scheme and end of the Jewish polity and most singular constitution. As the Jewish nation, therefore, was to be the depository of, and the means of preserving in the world, the knowledge and worship of the one true God, when it was lost and darkened in other countries, it became of the last importance to the execution of this purpose, that this nation should be warned and deterred, by every moral means, from sliding themselves into those practices, those errors, and that crime, against which it was the very design of their institution that they should strive and contend.

The form of expression used in the second commandment, and in this very part of it, much favours the interpretation for which I argue, namely, that the sentence or threatening was aimed against the sin of idolatry alone. The words are, "For I the Lord thy God am a *jealous* God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children." These two things, of being jealous, and of visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, are spoken of God in conjunction; and in such a manner, as to show that they refer to one subject. Now jealousy implies a rival. God's being jealous means, that he would not allow any other god to share with himself in the worship of his creatures: that is what is imported in the word jealous; and, therefore, that is the subject to which the threat of visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children is applied. According to this interpretation, the following expressions of the commandment, "Them that hate me, and them that love me," signify them that forsake and desert my worship and religion for the worship and religion of other gods, and them who adhere firmly and faithfully to my worship, in opposition to every other worship.

My second proposition is, that the threat relates to temporal, or, more properly speaking, to family prosperity and adversity. In the history of the Jews, most particularly of their kings, of whom, as was to be expected, we read and know the most, we meet with repeated instances of this same threat being both pronounced and executed against their family prosperity; and for this very same cause, their desertion of the true God, and going over, after the example of the nations around them to the worship of false gods. Amongst various other instances, one is very memorable and very direct to our present argument; and that is the instance of Ahab, who of all the idolatrous kings of Israel was the worst. The punishment threatened and denounced against his crime was this: "Behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha, the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger and made Israel to sin." The provocation, you will observe, was the introduction of false gods into his kingdom; and the prophet here not only threatens Ahab with the ruin and

destruction of his family, as the punishment of his sin, but points out to him two instances of great families having been destroyed for the very same reason. You afterwards read the full accomplishment of this sentence by the hand of Jehu. Now I consider these instances as in fact the execution of the second commandment, and as showing what sense that commandment bore. But if it were so; if the force of the threat was, that in the distribution and assignment of temporal prosperity and adversity, upon a man's family and race, respect would be had to his fidelity to God, or his rebellion against him in this article of false and idolatrous worship; then is the punishment, as to the nature and justice of it, agreeably to what we see in the constant and ordinary course of God's providence. The wealth and grandeur of families are commonly owing, not to the present generation, but to the industry, wisdom, or good conduct of a former ancestor. The poverty and depression of a family are not imputable to the present representatives of the family, but to the fault, the extravagance, or mismanagement, of those who went before them; of which nevertheless they feel the effects. All this we see every day; and we see it without surprise or complaint. What, therefore, accords with the state of things under the ordinary dispensations of Providence as to temporal prosperity and adversity, was by a special providence, and by a particular sentence, ordained to be the mode, and probably a most efficacious mode, of restraining and correcting an offence, from which it was of the utmost importance to deter the Jewish nation.

My third proposition is, that this commandment related particularly to the Jewish economy. In the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, you find Moses, with prodigious solemnity, pronouncing the blessings and cursings which awaited the children of Israel under the dispensation to which they were called; and you will observe, that these blessings consisted altogether of worldly benefits, and these curses of worldly punishments. Moses in effect declared, that with respect to this peculiar people, when they came into their own land, there should be amongst them such a signal and extraordinary and visible interposition of Providence, as to shower down blessings, and happiness, and prosperity, upon those who adhered faithfully to the God of their fathers, and to punish, with exemplary misfortunes, those who disobeyed and deserted him. Such, Moses told them, would be the order of God's government over them. This dispensation dealt in temporal rewards and punishments. And the second commandment, which made the temporal prosperity and adversity of families depend, in many instances, upon the religious behaviour of the ancestor of such families, was a branch and consistent part of that dispensation.

But, lastly and principally, my fourth proposition is, that at no rate does it affect, or was ever meant to affect, the acceptance or salvation of individuals in a future life. My proof of this proposition I draw from the 18th chapter of Ezekiel. It should seem from this chapter, that some of the Jews, at that time, had put too large an interpretation upon the second commandment; for the prophet puts this question into the mouth of his countrymen; he supposes them to be thus, as it were, expostulating with God: "Ye say, Why? Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?" that is the question he makes them ask. Now take notice of the answer; the answer which the prophet delivers in the name of God, is this: "When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die. The son shall *not* bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon *him*:" ver. 19, 20.

In the preceding part of the chapter, the prophet has dilated a good deal, and very expressly indeed, upon the same subject; all to confirm the great truth which he lays down. "Behold all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth *it* shall die." Now apply this to the second commandment: and the only way of reconciling them together, is by supposing that the second commandment related solely to temporal, or rather family adversity and prosperity, and Ezekiel's chapter to the rewards and punishments of a future state. When to this is added what hath been observed, that the threat in the second commandment belongs to the crime forbidden in that commandment, namely, the going over to false gods, and deserting the one true God; and that it also formed a part or branch of the Mosaic system which dealt throughout in temporal rewards and punishments, at that time dispensed by a particular providence: when these considerations are laid together, much of the difficulty, and much of the objection, which our own minds may have raised against this commandment, will, I hope, be removed.

SERMON XIV.

HOW VIRTUE PRODUCES BELIEF, AND VICE UNBELIEF.

If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.—John vii. 17.

It does not, I think, at first sight appear, why our behaviour should influence our belief, or how any particular course of action, good or bad, should affect our assent to any particular propositions which are offered to us: for truth or probability can never depend upon our conduct; the credibility or incredibility of religion is the same, whether we act well or ill, whether we obey its laws or disobey them. Nor is it very manifest, how even our perception of evidence or credibility should be affected by our virtues or vices; because conduct is immediately voluntary, belief is not: one is an act of the will, under the power of motives; the other is an act of the understanding, upon which motives do not, primarily at least, operate, nor ought to operate at all. Yet our Lord, in the text, affirms this to be the case, namely, that our behaviour does influence our belief, and to have been the case from the beginning, that is, even during his own ministry upon earth. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." It becomes, therefore, a subject of serious and religious inquiry, how, why, and to what extent, the declaration of the text may be maintained.

Now the first and most striking observation is, that it corresponds with experience. The fact, so far as can be observed, is as the text represents it to be. I speak of the general course of human conduct, which is the thing to be considered. Good men are generally believers; bad men are generally unbelievers. This is the general state of the case, not without exceptions; for, on the one hand, there may be men of regular external morals, who are yet unbelievers, because though immorality be one cause of unbelief, it is not the only cause: and, on the other hand, there are undoubtedly many, who, although they believe and tremble, yet go on in their sins, because their faith doth not regulate their practice. But, having respect to the ordinary course and state of human conduct, what our Saviour hath declared is verified by experience. He that doeth the will of God, cometh to believe that Jesus Christ is of God, namely, a messenger from God. A process some how or other takes place in the understanding, which brings the mind of him who acts rightly to this conclusion. A conviction is formed, and every day made stronger and stronger. No man ever comprehended the value of Christian precepts, but by conducting his life according to them. When, by so doing, he is brought to know their excellency, their perfection, I had almost said, their divinity, he is necessarily also brought to think well of the religion itself. Hear St. Paul: —"The night is far spent: the day is at hand: let us, therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light; let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ; and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof:" Rom. xiii. 11. It is recorded of this text, that it was the means of the conversion of a very eminent father of the church, St. Austin; for which reason I quote it, as an instance to my present purpose, since I apprehend it must have wrought with him in the manner here represented. I have no doubt but that others have been affected in like manner by this or other particular portions of Scripture; and that still greater numbers have been drawn to Christianity by the general impression which our Lord's discourses, and the speeches and letters of his apostles, have left upon their minds. This is sometimes called the internal evidence of our religion; and it is very strong. But inasmuch as it is a species of evidence which applies itself to the knowledge, love, and practice of virtue, it will operate most powerfully where it finds these qualities, or even these tendencies and dispositions subsisting. If this be the effect of virtuous conduct, and, in some proportion, the effect also of each separate act of virtue, the contrary effect must necessarily follow from a contrary course of behaviour. And perhaps it may assist us in unfolding the subject, to take up the inquiry in this order; because if it can be shown why, and in what manner, vice tends to obstruct, impair, and at length destroy our faith, it will not be difficult to allow, that virtue must facilitate, support, and confirm it: that, at least it will deliver us, or keep us free, from that weight of prejudice and resistance which is produced in the mind by vice, and which acts against the reception of religious truth.

Now the case appears to me to be no other than this: A great many persons, before they proceed upon an act of known transgression, do expressly state to themselves the question, whether religion be true or not; and in order to get at the object of their desire, (for the real matter to be determined is, whether they shall have their desire gratified or not,) in order, I say, to get at the pleasure in some cases, or in other cases, the point of interest, upon which they have set their hearts, they choose to decide, and they do in fact decide with themselves, that these things are not so certain, as to be a reason for them to give up the pleasure which lies before them, or the advantage which is now, and which may never be again in their power to compass. This conclusion does actually take place, and, at various times, must almost necessarily take place, in the minds of men of bad morals. And now remark the effect which it has upon their thoughts afterwards. When they come at another future time to reflect upon religion, they reflect upon it as upon what they had before adjudged to be unfounded, and too uncertain to be acted upon, or to be depended upon; and reflections, accompanied with this adverse and unfavourable impression, naturally lead to infidelity. Herein, therefore, is seen the fallacious operation of sin; first, in the circumstances under which men form their opinion and their conclusions concerning religion; and, secondly, in the effect, which conclusions, which doubts so formed, have upon their judgment afterwards. First, what is the situation of mind in which they decide concerning religion? and what can be expected from such a situation? Some magnified and alluring pleasure has stirred their desires and passions. It cannot be enjoyed without sin. Here is religion, denouncing and forbidding it on one side: there is opportunity drawing and pulling on the other. With this drag and bias upon their thoughts, they pronounce and decide concerning the most important of all subjects, and of all questions. If they should determine for the truth and reality of religion, they must sit down disappointed of a gratification upon which they had set their hearts, and of using an opportunity, which may never come again. Nevertheless they must determine one way or other. And this process, *viz.* a similar deliberation and a similar conclusion, is renewed and repeated, as often as occasions of sin offer. The effect, at length, is a settled persuasion against religion. For what is it, in persons who proceed in this manner, which rests and dwells upon their memories? What is it which gives to their judgment its turn and bias? It is these occasional decisions often repeated; which decisions have the same power and influence over the man's after-opinion, as if they had been made ever so impartially, or ever so correctly; whereas, in fact, they are made under circumstances which exclude, almost the possibility of their being made with fairness and with sufficient inquiry. Men decide under the power and influence of sinful temptation; but, having decided, the decision is afterwards remembered by them, and grows into a settled and habitual opinion, as much as if they had proceeded in it without any bias or prejudice whatever.

The extent to which this cause acts, that is, the numbers who are included in its influence, will be further known by the following observation. I have said, that sinners oftentimes *expressly* state to themselves the question, whether religion be true or not; and that they state to themselves this

question, at the time when they are about to enter upon some act of sin which religion condemns; and I believe the case so to be. I believe that this statement is often expressly made, and in the manner which I have represented. But there is also a tacit rejection of religion, which has nearly the same effect. Whenever a man deliberately ventures upon an action which he knows that religion prohibits, he tacitly rejects religion. There may not pass in his thoughts every step which we have described, nor may he come expressly to the conclusion: but he acts upon the conclusion; he practically adopts it. And the doing so will alienate his mind from religion, as surely, almost, as if he had formally argued himself into an opinion of its untruth. The effect of sin is necessarily, and highly, and in all cases, adverse to the production and existence of religious faith. Real difficulties are doubled and trebled, when they fall in with vicious propensities; imaginary difficulties are readily started. Vice is wonderfully acute in discovering reasons on its own side. This may be said of all kinds of vice; but, I think, it more particularly holds good of what are called licentious vices, that is, of vices of debauchery; for sins of debauchery have a tendency, which other species of sin have not so directly, to unsettle and weaken the powers of the understanding, as well as, in a greater degree, I think, than other vices, to render the heart thoroughly corrupt. In a mind so wholly depraved, the impression of any argument, relating to a moral or religious subject, is faint, and slight, and transitory. To a vitiated palate no meat has its right taste; with a debauched mind, no reasoning has its proper influence.

But, secondly: Have we not also from Scripture, reason to believe, that God's holy Spirit will be assisting to those who earnestly pray for it, and who sincerely prepare themselves for its reception; and that it will be assisting to them in this matter of faith in religion.—The language of Scripture is, that God gives his holy Spirit to them that ask it; and moreover, that to them who use and improve it as they ought, it is given in more and more abundance. "He that hath, to him shall be given more. He that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath:" Mat. xiii. 12. He who is studious to improve his measure of grace, shall find that measure increased upon him. He who neglects or stifles, neglects through irreligion, carelessness, and heedlessness, buries in sensuality, or stifles by the opposition of sin, the portion of grace, and assistance which is vouchsafed to him, he, the Scripture says, will find that portion withdrawn from him. Now, this being the general nature and economy of God's assisting grace, there is no reason why it should not extend to our faith, as well as to our practice; our perceiving the truth, as well as our obeying the truth, may be helped and succoured by it. God's Spirit can have access to our understandings, as well as our affections. He can render the mind sensible to the impressions of evidence, and the power of truth. If creatures, like us, might take upon themselves to judge what is a proper object of divine help, it should seem to be a serious, devout, humble, and apprehensive mind, anxiously desiring to learn and know the truth: and, in order to know it, keeping the heart and understanding pure and prepared for that purpose; that is to say, carefully abstaining from the indulgence of passions, and from practices which harden and indispose the mind against religion. I say, a mind so guarding and qualifying itself, and imploring with devout earnestness and solicitude, the aid of God's holy Spirit in its meditations and inquiries, seems, so far as we can presume to judge, as meet an object of divine help and favour as any of which we can form an idea; and it is not for us to narrow the promises of God, concerning his assisting grace, so as, without authority, to exclude such an object from it.

From the doctrine which has been thus concisely proposed, various important rules and reflections arise.

First: Let not men, involved in sinful courses, wonder at the difficulties which they meet with in religion. It is an effect of sin, which is almost sure to follow. Sin never fails, both to magnify real difficulties, and to suggest imaginary ones. It rests and dwells upon objections, because they help the sinner, in some measure, to excuse his conduct to himself.—They cause him to come to a conclusion, which permits the gratification of his passions, or the compassing of his purpose. Deep and various is the deceitfulness of sin, of licentious sins most particularly; for they cloud the understanding; they disqualify men for serious meditation of any kind; above all, for the meditation of religion.

Secondly: Let them, who ask for more light, first take care to act up to the light which they have. Scripture and experience join their testimony to this point, namely, that they, who faithfully practise what they do know, and live agreeably to the belief which they have, and to the just and rational consequences of that belief, seldom fail to proceed further, and to acquire more and more confidence in the truth of religion; whereas, if they live in opposition to the degree of belief which they have, be it what it may, even *it* will gradually grow weaker and weaker, and, at length, die away in the soul.

Thirdly: Let them who are anxious to arrive at just sentiments of religion, keep their minds in a capable state; that is, free from the bias of former doubts, conceived at a time when the power and influence of sinful temptation was upon them; suggested, in fact, lest they should find themselves obliged to give up some gratification upon which they had set their hearts; and which decisions, nevertheless, and doubts, have the same operation upon their judgments, as if they had been the result of the most pure and impartial reasoning. It is not peculiar to religion; it is true of all subjects, that the mind is sure almost to be misled, which lies under a load of prejudice contracted from circumstances, in which it is next to impossible to weigh arguments justly, or to see clearly.

Fourthly: Let them, let all, especially those who find themselves in a dissatisfied state of mind, fly to prayer. Let them pray earnestly and incessantly for God's assisting grace and influence; assisting, if it be his good pleasure, as well our minds and understandings in searching after truth, as our hearts and affections in obeying it. I say again, let us pray unceasingly for grace and help from the Spirit of God. When we pray for any worldly object, we may pray mistakenly. We may be ignorant of our own good; we may err egregiously concerning it. But when we pray for spiritual aid and grace, we are sure that we pray

for what we want; for what, if granted, will be the greatest of all blessings. And we pray with hope, because we have this gracious assurance given us by the Lord himself of grace and mercy: "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"—Matt. vii. 11.

SERMON XV.

JOHN'S MESSAGE TO JESUS.

Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?—Matt. xi. 2, 3.

THESE words state a transaction, to say the least of it, of a singular kind, and well entitled to observation. Some time before our Lord's appearance, John the Baptist had produced himself to the country, as a messenger from God, and as a public preacher. The principal thing which he preached was, that a greater and more extraordinary person than himself, that is to say, no other than the long-foretold and long-expected Messiah, was about shortly to appear in the world; that for the appearance of this person, which would be the setting up of the kingdom of God upon earth, all men were to prepare themselves by repentance and reformation. Thus did John preach, before it was known or declared, and before he (John himself) knew or declared who this extraordinary person was. It was, as it should seem, upon our Lord's offering himself to John to be baptized of him in Jordan, that John, for the first time, knew and published him to be that person. This testimony and record John afterwards repeated concerning him in this manner, and it is remarkable: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man, which is preferred before me, for he was before me, and *I knew him not;* but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him; and I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record, that this is the Son of God."

It came to pass, that soon after our Lord's public appearance, John was cast into prison, and *there* remained, till, by a barbarous order from Herod, in wicked compliance with a wicked vow, this good and courageous servant of God was beheaded. It does not seem quite certain, whether he was not imprisoned twice. In prison, however, his disciples, as was natural, came to him, and related to him the great things which Jesus had lately been doing; and it appears, from the accounts of the different evangelists, and by laying these accounts together in order of time, that Jesus, a little before this, amongst other miracles, had cured the centurion's servant without coming near him, and had also raised the young man at Nain to life, when they were carrying him out to his funeral; miracles, which, it may be supposed, were much noised abroad in the country. What then did John the Baptist do, upon receiving this intelligence? He *sent* to Jesus two of his disciples, saying, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?"

It will appear odd that John should entertain any doubt, or require any satisfaction about this matter; he, who had himself publicly announced Jesus to be the Messiah looked for, and that also upon the most undeniable grounds, because he saw the Spirit descending and remaining upon him; the token which had been given him, whereby this person was to be distinguished by him.

This was a difficulty which interpreters of Scripture, in very early times saw; and the answer which they gave to it I believe to be the true one; namely, that John sent this message, not from any doubt which he himself entertained of the matter, but in order that the doubts which his disciples had conceived about it, might receive an answer and satisfaction at the fountain head; from Jesus himself, who was best able to give it.

You will, therefore, now observe what this answer was, and how, and under what circumstances it was given. If you turn to St. Luke's statement of the transaction, chap. vii. verse 20th, you will there find it expressly asserted, what is only implied and tacitly referred to by St. Matthew; (and this is one instance, amongst many, of the advantage of bringing the accounts of the different evangelists together;) you will find, I say, that it so happened, I ought to have said that it was so ordered by Providence, that at the time, the precise hour, when these messengers from John arrived, our Lord was in the very act of working miracles. In that same hour, says Luke, he cured many of infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight: so that the messengers themselves were eye-witnesses of his powers, and of his gifts, and of his mighty works; and to this evidence he refers them; and a more decisive or dignified answer could not possibly have been given. He neither says he was, nor he was not the person they inquired after, but bids them take notice and tell John of what they *saw*, and make their own conclusion from it. "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached." It does not, I think, appear, nor is it necessary to suppose, that *all* these species of miracles were performed then, or before their eyes. It is specifically mentioned, that he then cured many of plagues and infirmities, cast out evil spirits, and restored sight to the blind: but it is not mentioned, for instance, that he then raised the dead, though that miracle be referred to in his answer. After having wrought, whilst they were present, many and various species of decisive miracles, he was well entitled to demand their credit and assent to others upon his own testimony and assertion.

Now from this answer of our Lord's, we are entitled to infer, (and this I think is the useful inference to be drawn from it,) that the faith which he required, the assent which he demanded, was a rational assent and faith founded upon proof and evidence. His exhortation was, "believe me for the very works' sake." He did not bid Philip,

upon that occasion, or the disciples of John upon this, believe him, because he was the Son of God, because he came down from heaven, because he was in the Father and the Father in him, because he was with God and from God, because the Father had given unto him the Spirit without measure, because he was inspired in the fullest and largest sense of the word; for all these characters and pretensions, though the highest that could belong to any being whatsoever, to a prophet, or to more than a prophet, were nevertheless to be ascertained by facts. When ascertained, they were grounds of the most absolute confidence in his word, of the most implicit and unlimited reliance upon his authority; but they were to be ascertained by facts. To facts, therefore, our Lord appeals; to facts he refers them, and to the demonstration which they afforded of his power and truth. For shutting their eyes against faith, or, more properly speaking, for shutting their hearts and understandings against the proof and conclusion which facts afforded, he pronounces them liable to condemnation. They were to believe his word, because of his works: that was exactly what he required. "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me; and the Father himself who hath sent me beareth witness of me:" John v. 36. It is remarkable that John the Baptist wrought no miracle; therefore the authority and confirming proof of *his* mission rested very much upon the evidences which were exhibited, not by himself, but by the person whose appearance he professed to foretel. And undoubtedly the miracles of our Lord did, by a reflected operation, establish the preaching of John. For if a person in these days should appear, not working any miracle himself, but declaring that another and greater person was soon to follow, and if that other and greater person did accordingly soon follow, and show forth mighty deeds, the authority of the first person's mission would be ratified by the second person's works. They who might doubt, nay reasonably doubt, concerning the first person's truth and pretensions *before*, would be fully satisfied of them afterwards. And this was exactly the turn which some rational and considerate Jews gave to the matter: "And many resorted to him, and said, John did no miracle; but all things that John spake of this man were true." The effect of this observation was, what it ought to be, "many believed on him there:" John x. 41, 42.

This distinction between our Lord and his forerunner, in one working miracles, and the other not, furnishes an account for two things which we meet with in the Gospels; one is, John's declaring that when the person of whom he spoke should appear, his own ministry, which was then much followed and attended, would sink in importance and esteem. "He must increase, I must decrease —He that cometh after me is preferred before me —He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to *him*." The other is our Lord's own reflection upon John's testimony in his favour, which was exactly agreeable to the truth of the case. "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth; but I receive not testimony from man. He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But *I* have greater witness than that of John—the *works* which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that *I do*, bear witness of me." As if he had said: "My own performance of miracles is a higher and surer proof of my mission, than any testimony which could be given to me by another who did not perform miracles, however great, or praiseworthy, or excellent his character and his preaching were in all respects, or however much his followers confided in him; the one was the testimony of men, the other of God." "I receive not testimony of man;" the proofs which I myself exhibit before your eyes of divine power, supersede human testimony.

Again: Our Lord put the truth of his pretensions, precisely and specifically upon the evidence of his miracles: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, though ye believe me not, believe the works:" John x. 37. What fairer appeal could be made? Could more be done to challenge inquiry, or place the question upon the right ground?

Lastly: In the xvth chapter and 24th verse, our Lord fixes the guilt of the unbelieving Jews upon this article, that they rejected miraculous proof, which ought to have convinced them; and that if they had not had such proof they might have been excusable, or, comparatively speaking, they would not have had sin. His words are very memorable. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin."

It appears, therefore, that as well in the answer to John's messengers, as in the other passages of his history and discourses which resemble this, our Lord acted a part the most foreign and distant from the part of an impostor or enthusiast that can possibly be conceived. Was it for an impostor or enthusiast to refer messengers who came to him, to miraculous works performed before their eyes, to things done upon the spot: to the testimony of their own senses. "Show John those things which ye do see and hear." Would, could any other than a prophet come from God do this? In like manner, was it for any other than a divine messenger to bid his very disciples not believe in him, if he did not these works; or to tell unbelievers, that if he had not done among them works which none other man did, their unbelief might have been excusable? In all this we discern conviction and sincerity, fairness, truth, and evidence.

SERMON XVI.

ON INSENSIBILITY TO OFFENCES.

Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my secret faults. Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me.—Psalm xix. 12, 13.

THESE words express a rational and affecting prayer, according to the sense which they carry with them at first sight, and without entering into any interpretation of them whatsoever. Who is there that will not join heartily in this prayer? for who is there that has not occasion to pray against his sins? We are *laden* with the weight of our sins. "The remembrance of them is

grievous to us, the burden of them is intolerable." But beyond this, these same words, when they come to be fully understood, have a still stronger meaning, and still more applicable to the state and condition of our souls; which I will endeavour to set before you.

You will observe the expression, "my secret faults: O cleanse thou me from my *secret* faults." Now the question is, to whom are these faults a secret? to myself; or to others? whether the prayer relates to faults which are concealed from mankind, and are in that sense secret; or to faults which are concealed from the offender himself, and are therefore secret, in the most full and strict sense of which the term is capable? Now, I say, that the context, or whole passage taken together, *obliges* us to understand the word *secret* in this latter sense. For observe two particulars. The first verse of the text runs thus: "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my secret faults." Now, to give a connexion to the two parts of this verse, it is necessary to suppose, that one reason, for which it was so difficult for any man to know how oft he offended was, that many of his faults were *secret;* but in what way and to whom secret? to himself undoubtedly: otherwise the secrecy could have been no reason or cause of that difficulty. The merely being concealed from others would be nothing to the present purpose; because the most concealed sins, in that sense, are as well known to the sinner himself, as those which are detected or most open; and therefore such concealment would not account for the sinner's difficulty in understanding the state of his soul and of his conscience. To me it appears very plain, that the train of the Psalmist's thoughts went thus:—He is led to cast back his recollection upon the sins of his life; he finds himself, as many of us must do, lost and bewildered in their number and frequency; because, beside all other reasons of confusion, there were many which were unnoticed, unreckoned, and unobserved. Against this class of sins, which, for this reason, he calls his secret faults, he raises up his voice to God in prayer. This is evidently, as I think, the train and connexion of thought; and this requires, that the secret faults here spoken of be explained of such faults as were secret to the person himself. It makes no connexion, it carries with it no consistent meaning, to interpret them of those faults which were concealed from others. This is one argument for the exposition contended for; another is the following. You will observe in the text that two kinds of sins are distinctly spoken of under the name of "secret faults, and presumptuous sins." The words are, "O cleanse thou me from my secret faults; keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins." Now, it will not do to consider these secret faults as merely concealed faults; because they are not necessarily distinguished from, nor can be placed in opposition to, presumptuous sins. The Psalmist is here addressing God; he is deeply affected with the state of his soul, and with his sins, considered in relation to God. Now, with respect to God, there may be, and there often is, as much presumption, as much daring in committing a concealed sin, as in committing a sin which is open to the world. The circumstance of concealment, or detection, makes no difference at all in this respect; and therefore they could not properly be placed in different classes; nor would it be natural so to place them; but offences which escape the sinner's own notice at the time, may certainly be distinguished from those which are committed with a high hand, with a full knowledge of the guilt, and defiance of the consequences; and that is, as I believe, the distinction here intended: and the one the Psalmist called his secret faults, the other his presumptuous sins. Upon the whole, therefore, I conclude, that the secret sins against which the Psalmist prayed, were sins secret to himself.

But here, therefore, comes the principal question—How there *can* be any sins of this sort? how that can be a sin, which is neither observed, nor known to be so by the person who commits it? And then there comes also a second consideration, which is; if there be such, what ought to be done with respect to them? Now, as well upon the authority of the text, as upon what is the real case with human nature, when that case is rightly understood, I contend, first, that there are many violations of God's laws, which the men who are guilty of them, are not sensible of at the time; and yet, secondly, such, as that their want of being sensible of them, does not excuse, or make them cease to be sins. All this, in truth, is no other than the regular effect of sinful habits. Such is the power of custom over our consciences, that there is, perhaps, hardly any bad action which a man is capable of committing, that he may not commit so often; as to become unconscious of its guilt, as much as of the most indifferent thing which he does. If some very great and atrocious crimes may be thought exceptions to this observation, and that no habit or custom can by any possibility reconcile them to the human conscience; it is only because they are such as cannot, from their very nature, be repeated so often by the same person, as to become familiar and habitual: if they could, the consequence would be the same; they would be no more thought of by the sinner himself, than other habitual sins are. But great outrageous crimes against life, for instance, and property, and public safety, may be laid out of the question, as not falling, I trust and believe, within the case of any one who hears me; and as in no case whatever capable of being so common, as to be fair experiments of the strength of our observation. These are not what compose our account with God. A man may be (as indeed most men are) quite free from the crimes of murder, robbery, and the like, and yet be *far* from the kingdom of God. I fear it may be said of most of us, that the class of sins which compose our account with God, are habitual sins; habitual *omissions*, and habitual *commissions*. Now it is true of both these, that we may have continued in them so long, they may have become so familiar to us by repetition, that we think nothing at all of them. We may neglect any duty, till we forget that it is one; we may neglect our prayers; we may neglect our devotion; we may neglect every duty towards God, till we become so unaccustomed and unused to them, as to be insensible that we are incurring any omission, or contracting, from that omission, any guilt which can hurt; and yet we may be, in truth, all the while "treasuring up wrath, against the day of wrath." How many thousands, for instance, by omitting to attend the sacrament, have come not to know that it forms any part of Christian obligation; and long disuse and discontinuance would have the same effect upon any other duty, how-

ever plain might be the proof of it, when the matter came to be considered.

It is not less so with sins of commission. Serious minds are shocked with observing with what complete unconcern and indifference many forbidden things are practised. The persons who are guilty of them, do not, by any mark or symptom whatever, appear to feel the smallest rebuke of conscience, or to have the least sense of either guilt, or danger, or shame, in what they do; and it not only appears to be so, but it is so. They are, in fact, without any notice, consciousness, or compunction upon the subject. These sins, therefore, if they be such, are secret sins to them. But are they not therefore sins? That becomes the next great question. We must allow, because fact proves it, that habit and custom can destroy the sense and perception of sin. Does the act then, in that person, cease to be any longer a sin? This must be asserted by those who argue, that nothing can be a sin, but what is known and understood, and also felt and perceived to be so by the sinner himself at the time; and who, consequently, deny that there are any secret sins in our sense of that expression. Now mark the consequences which would follow such an opinion. It is then the timorous *beginner* in wicked courses who alone is to be brought to account. Can such a doctrine be maintained? Sinners are called upon by preachers of the Gospel, and over and over again called upon, to compare themselves with themselves; themselves at one time with themselves at another; their former selves, when they first entered upon sinful allowances, and their present selves, since they have been confirmed in them. With what fear, and scruple, and reluctance, what sense and acknowledgment of wrong, what apprehension of danger, against what remonstrance of reason, and with what opposition and violence to their religious principle, they first gave way to temptation! With what ease, if ease it may be called, at least with what hardness and unconcern, they now continue in practices which they once dreaded! in a word, what a change, as to the particular article in question at least, has taken place in their moral sentiments! Yet, notwithstanding this change in *them*, the reason, which made what they are doing a sin, remains the same that it was at first: at first they saw great force and strength in that reason; at present they see none; but, in truth, it is all the while the same. Unless, therefore, we will choose to say, that a man has only to harden himself in his sins, (which thing perseverance will always do for him,) and that with the sense he takes away the guilt of them, and that the only sinner is the conscious, trembling, affrightened, reluctant sinner; that the confirmed sinner is not a sinner at all; unless we will advance this, which affronts all principles of justice and sense, we must confess, that secret sins are both possible and frequent things: that with the habitual sinner, and with every man, in so far as he is, and in that article in which he is, an habitual sinner, this is almost sure to be the case.

What then are the reflections suitable to such a case? First, to join most sincerely with the Psalmist in his prayer to God, "O cleanse thou me from my secret faults." Secondly, to see, in this consideration, the exceedingly great danger of evil habits of all kinds. It is a dreadful thing to commit sins without knowing it, and yet to have those sins to answer for. That is dreadful; and yet it is no other than the just consequence and effect of sinful habits. They destroy in us the perception of guilt: that experience proves.—They do not destroy the guilt itself: that no man can argue, because it leads to injustice and absurdity.

How well does the Scripture express the state of an habitual sinner, when he calls him "*dead* in trespasses and sins!" His conscience is dead: that, which ought to be the living, actuating, governing principle of the whole man, is dead within him; is extinguished by the power of sin reigning in his heart. He is incapable of perceiving his sins, whilst he commits them with greediness. It is evident, that a vast alteration must take place in such a man, before he be brought into the way of salvation. It is a great change from innocence to guilt, when a man falls from a life of virtue to a life of sin. But the recovery from it is much greater; because the very secrecy of our sins to ourselves, the unconsciousness of them, which practice and custom, and repetition and habit, have produced in us, is an almost unsurmountable hinderance to an effectual reformation.

SERMON XVII.

SERIOUSNESS OF HEART AS TO RELIGION.

But that on the good ground are they, who in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.—Luke viii. 15.

It may be true, that a right religious principle produces corresponding external actions, and yet it may not be true, that external actions are what we should always, or entirely, or principally, look to for the purpose of estimating our religious character; or from whence alone we should draw our assurance and evidence of being in the right way.

External actions must depend upon ability, and must wait for opportunity. From a change in the heart, a visible outward change will ensue: from an amendment of disposition, an amended conduct will follow; but it may neither be so soon nor so evident, nor to such a degree, as we may at first sight expect, inasmuch as it will be regulated by occasions and by ability. I do not mean to say, (for I do not believe it to be so,) that there is any person so forlorn and destitute, as to have no good in his power: expensive kindnesses may not; but there is much kindness which is not expensive: a kindness of temper; a readiness to oblige; a willingness to assist; a constant inclination to promote the comfort and satisfaction of all who are about us, of all with whom we have concern or connexion, of all with whom we associate or converse.

There is also a concern for the virtue of those over whom, or with whom, we can have any sort of influence, which is a natural concomitant of a radical concern for virtue in ourselves.

But, above all, it is undoubtedly, in every person's power, whether poor or rich, weak or strong, ill or well endowed by nature or education, it is, I say, in every person's power to avoid sin: if he can do little good, to take care that he do no ill.

Although, therefore, there be no person in the world so circumstanced, but who both can and will testify his inward principle by his outward behaviour, in one shape or other; yet on account of the very great difference of those circumstances in which men are placed, and to which their outward exertions are subjected, outward behaviour is not always a just measure of inward principle.

But there is a second case, and that but too common, in which outward behaviour is no measure of religious principle at all; and that is, when it springs from other and different motives and reason from those which religion presents. A very bad man may be externally good: a man completely irreligious at the heart may, for the sake of character, for the advantage of having a good character, for the sake of decency, for the sake of being trusted and respected, and well spoken of, from a love of praise and commendation, from a view of carrying his schemes and designs in the world, or of raising himself by strength of character, or at least from a fear lest a tainted character should be an obstacle to his advancement—from these and a thousand such sort of considerations, which might be reckoned up; and with which, it is evident, that religion hath no concern or connexion whatever, men may be both active, and forward, and liberal, in doing good; and exceedingly cautious of giving offence by doing evil; and this may be either wholly, or in part, the case with ourselves.

In judging, therefore, and examining ourselves, with a view of knowing the real condition of our souls, the real state and the truth of our spiritual situation with respect to God, and in respect to salvation, it is neither enough, nor is it safe, to look only to our external conduct.

I do not speak in any manner of judging of other men: if that were necessary at all, which, with a view to religion, it never is, different rules must be laid down for it. I now only speak of that which is necessary, and most absolutely so, in judging rightly of ourselves. To our hearts, therefore, we must look for the marks and tokens of salvation, for the evidence of being in the right way. "That on the good ground are they, who in an honest and good heart bring forth fruit with patience."

One of these marks, and that no slight one, is seriousness of the heart. I can have no hope at all of a man who does not find himself serious in religious matters, serious at the heart. If the judgment of Almighty God at the last day; if the difference between being saved and being lost; being accepted in the beloved, and being cast forth into outer darkness; being bid by a tremendous word either to enter into the joy of our Father, or to go into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for all who have served him and not God: if these things do not make us serious, then it is most certain, either that we do not believe them, or that we have not yet thought of them at all, or that we have positively broken off thinking of them, have turned away from the subject, have refused to let it enter, have shut our minds against it; or, lastly, that such a levity of mind is our character, as nothing whatever can make any serious impression upon. In any of these cases our condition is deplorable; we cannot look for salvation from Christ's religion under any of them. Do we want seriousness concerning religion, because we do not believe in it? we cannot expect salvation from a religion which we reject. What the root of unbelief in us may be, how far voluntary and avoidable, how far involuntary and unavoidable, God knows, and God only knows: and, therefore, he will in his mercy treat us as he thinketh fit; but we have not the religion to rely upon, to found our hopes upon; we cannot, as I say again, expect salvation from a religion which we reject.

If the second case be ours, namely, that we have not yet thought of these things, and *therefore* it is, that we are not serious about them, it is high time with every one, that he do think of them. These great events are not at a distance from us; they approach to every one of us with the end of our lives; they are the same to all intents and purposes, as if they took place at our deaths. It is ordained for men once to die, and after that, judgment. Wherefore it is folly in any man or woman whatever, in any thing above a child, to say they have not thought of religion: How know they that they will be permitted to think of it at all? it is worse than folly, it is high presumption. It is an answer one sometimes receives, but it is a foolish answer. Religion can do no good till it sinks into the thoughts. Commune with thyself and be still. Can any health, or strength, or youth, any vivacity of spirits, any crowd or hurry of business, much less any course of pleasures, be an excuse for not thinking about religion? Is it of importance only to the old and infirm, and dying, to be saved? is it not of the same importance to the young and strong? can they be saved without religion? or can religion save them without thinking about it?

If, thirdly, such a levity of mind be our character, as nothing can make an impression upon, this levity must be cured before ever we can draw near unto God. Surely human life wants not materials and occasions for the remedying of this great infirmity. Have we met with no troubles to bring us to ourselves? no disasters in our affairs? no losses in our families? no strokes of misfortune or affliction? no visitations in our health? no warnings in our constitution? If none of these things have befallen us, and it is for that reason that we continue to want seriousness and solidity of character, then it shows how necessary these things are for our real interest and for our real happiness: we are examples how little mankind can do without them, and that a state of unclouded pleasure and prosperity is, of all others, the most unfit for man. It generates the precise evil we complain of, a giddiness and levity of temper upon which religion cannot act. It indisposes a man for weighty and momentous concerns of any kind; but it most fatally disqualifies him for the concerns of religion. That is its worst consequence, though others may be bad. I believe, therefore, first, that there is such a thing as a levity of thought and character, upon which religion has no effect. I believe, secondly, that this is greatly cherished by health, and pleasures, and prosperity, and gay society. I believe, thirdly, that whenever this is the case, these things, which are accounted such blessings, which men covet and envy, are, in truth, deep and heavy calamities. For, lastly, I believe, that this levity must be changed into seriousness, before the mind infected with it can come unto God; and most assuredly true it is, that we cannot come to happiness in the next world, unless we come to God in this.

I repeat again, therefore, that we must look to our hearts for our character: not simply or solely to our actions, which may be and will be of a mixed nature, but to the internal state of our disposition. That is the place in which religion dwells: in that it consists. And I also repeat, that one of these internal marks of a right disposition, of an honest and good heart, as relative to religion, is seriousness.—There can be no true religion without it. And further, a mark and test of a growing religion, is a growing seriousness; so that when, instead of seeing these things at a distance, we begin to look *near* upon them; when from faint, they become distinct; when, instead of now and then perceiving a slight sense of these matters, a hasty passage of them, as it were, through the thoughts, they begin to rest and settle there: in a word, when we become *serious* about religion, then, and not till then, may we hope that things are going on right within us; that the soil is prepared, the seed sown. Its future growth, and maturity, and fruit may not yet be known, but the seed is sown in the heart: and in a serious heart it will not be sown in vain; in a heart not yet become serious, it may.

Religious seriousness is not churlishness, is not severity, is not gloominess, is not melancholy: but it is nevertheless a *disposition* of mind, and, like every disposition, it will show itself one way or other. It will, in the first place, neither invite, nor entertain, nor encourage any thing which has a tendency to turn religion into ridicule. It is not in the nature of things, that a serious mind should find delight or amusement in so doing; it is not in the nature of things, that it should not feel an inward pain and reluctance whenever it is done. Therefore, if we are capable of being pleased with hearing religion treated or talked of with levity; made, in any manner whatever, an object of sport and jesting; if we are capable of making it so ourselves, or joining with others, as in a diversion, in so doing; nay, if we do not feel ourselves at the heart grieved and offended, whenever it is our lot to be present at such sort of conversation and discourse: then is the inference as to ourselves infallible, that we are not yet serious in our religion; and then it will be for us to remember, that seriousness is one of those marks by which we may fairly judge of the state of our mind and disposition as to religion; and that the state of our mind and disposition is the very thing to be consulted, to be known, to be examined and searched into for the purpose of ascertaining whether we are in a right and safe way or not. Words and actions are to be judged of with a reference to the disposition which they indicate. There may be language, there may be expressions, there may be behaviour of no very great consequence in itself, and considered in itself, but of very great consequence indeed, when considered as indicating a disposition and state of mind. If it show, with respect to religion, *that* to be wanting within, which ought to be there, namely, a deep and fixed sense of our personal and individual concern in religion, of its importance above all other important things; then it shows, that there is yet a deficiency in our hearts; which, without delay, must be supplied by closer meditation upon the subject than we have hitherto used; and, above all, by earnest and unceasing prayer for such a portion and measure of spiritual influence shed upon our hearts, as may cure and remedy that heedlessness and coldness, and deadness, and unconcern, which are fatal, and under which we have so much reason to know that we as yet unhappily labour.

SERMON XVIII.

(PART I.)

THE EFFICACY OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. —Hebrews ix. 26.

THE salvation of mankind, and most particularly in so far as the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are concerned in it, and whereby he comes to be called our Saviour and our Redeemer, ever has been, and ever must be, a most interesting subject to all serious minds.

Now there is one thing in which there is no division or difference of opinion at all; which is, that the death of Jesus Christ is spoken of in reference to human salvation, in terms and in a manner, in which the death of no person whatever is spoken of besides. Others have died martyrs as well as our Lord. Others have suffered in a righteous cause, as well as he; but that is said of him, and of his death and sufferings, which is not said of any one else. An efficacy and a concern are ascribed to them, in the business of human salvation, which are not ascribed to any other.

What may be called the first Gospel declaration upon this subject, is the exclamation of John the Baptist, when he saw Jesus coming unto him: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I think it plain, that when John called our Lord the Lamb of God, he spoke with a relation to his being sacrificed, and to the effect of that sacrifice upon the pardon of human sin; and this, you will observe, was said of him even before he entered upon his office. If any doubt could be made of the meaning of the Baptist's expression, it is settled by other places in which the like allusion to a Lamb is adopted; and where the allusion is specifically applied to his death, considered as a sacrifice.

In the Acts of the Apostles, the following words of Isaiah are, by Philip the evangelist, distinctly applied to our Lord, and to our Lord's death. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth;" therefore it was to his death, you see, that the description relates. Now, I say, that this is applied to Christ most distinctly; for the pious eunuch who was reading the passage in his chariot, was at a loss to know to whom it should be applied. "I pray thee," saith he to Philip, "of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of some other man?" And Philip, you read, taught him that it was spoken of Christ. And I say, secondly, that this particular part and expression of the prophecy being applied to Christ's death, carries the whole prophecy to the same subject; for it is undoubtedly one entire prophecy; therefore the other expressions, which are still stronger, are applica-

ble as well as this. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed; the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." There is a strong and very apposite text of St. Peter's, in which the application of the term "Lamb" to our Lord, and the sense in which it is applied, can admit of no question at all. It is in the 1st chapter of the first epistle, the 18th and 19th verses: "Forasmuch as ye know, that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." All the use I make of these passages is to show, that the prophet Isaiah, six hundred years before his birth; St. John the Baptist, upon the commencement of his ministry; St. Peter, his friend, companion, and apostle, after the transaction was over, speak of Christ's death, under the figure of a lamb being sacrificed; that is, as having the effect of a sacrifice, the effect in kind, though infinitely higher in degree, upon the pardon of sins, and the procurement of salvation; and that this is spoken of the death of no other person whatever.

Other plain and distinct passages, declaring the efficacy of Christ's death, are the following, Hebrews ix. 26: "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." And in the xth chapter, 12th verse: "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." I observe again, that nothing of this sort is said of the death of any other person; no such efficacy is imputed to any other martyrdom. So likewise in the following text, from the Epistle to the Romans: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then being now justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." "Reconciled to God by the death of his Son;" therefore that death had an efficacy in our reconciliation; but reconciliation is preparatory to salvation. The same thing is said by the same apostle in his Epistle to the Colossians: "He has reconciled us to his Father in his cross, and in the body of his flesh through death." What is said of reconciliation in these texts, is said in other texts of sanctification, which also is preparatory to salvation. Thus, Hebrews x. 10: "We are sanctified:" how? namely, "by the offering of the body of Christ once for all;" so again in the same epistle, the blood of Jesus is called "the blood of the covenant by which we are sanctified."

In these and many other passages, that lie spread in different parts of the New Testament, it appears to be asserted, that the death of Christ had an efficacy in the procurement of human salvation. Now these expressions mean something, mean something substantial; they are used concerning no other person, nor the death of any other person whatever. Therefore Christ's death was something more than a confirmation of his preaching; something more than a pattern of a holy and patient, and perhaps voluntary martyrdom; something more than necessarily antecedent to his resurrection, by which he gave a grand and clear proof of human resurrection. Christ's death was all these, but it was something more; because none of these ends, nor all of them, satisfy the text you have heard; come up to the assertions and declarations which are delivered concerning it.

Now allowing the subject to stop here, allowing that we know nothing, nor can know any thing concerning it but what is written, and that nothing more is written than that the death of Christ had a real and essential effect upon human salvation; we have certainly before us a doctrine of a very peculiar, perhaps I may say of a very unexpected kind, in some measure hidden in the councils of the divine nature, but still so far revealed to us, as to excite two great religious sentiments, admiration and gratitude.

That a person of a nature different from all other men; nay, superior, for so he is distinctly described to be, to all created beings, whether men or angels; united with the Deity as no other person is united; that such a person should come down from heaven, and suffer upon earth the pains of an excruciating death, and that these his submissions and sufferings should avail and produce a great effect in the procurement of the future salvation of mankind, cannot but excite wonder. But it is by no means improbable on that account; on the contrary, it might be reasonably supposed beforehand, that if any thing was disclosed to us touching a future life, and touching the dispensations of God to men, it would be something of a nature to excite admiration. In the world in which we live, we may be said to have some knowledge of its laws, and constitution, and nature: we have long experienced them; as also of the beings with whom we converse, or amongst whom we are conversant, we may be said to understand something, at least they are familiar to us; we are not surprised with appearances which every day occur. But of the world and the life to which we are destined, and of the beings amongst whom we may be brought, the case is altogether different. Here is no experience to explain things; no use or familiarity to take off surprise, to reconcile us to difficulties, to assist our apprehension. In the new order of things, according to the new laws of nature, every thing will be suitable; suitable to the beings who are to occupy the future world; but that suitableness cannot, as it seems to me, be possibly perceived by us, until we are acquainted with that order and with those beings. So that it arises, as it were, from the necessity of things, that what is told us by a divine messenger of heavenly affairs, of affairs purely spiritual, that is, relating purely to another world, must be so comprehended by us, as to excite admiration.

But, secondly; partially as we may, or perhaps must, comprehend this subject, in common with all subjects which relate strictly and solely to the nature of our future life, we may comprehend it quite sufficiently for one purpose; and that is gratitude. It was only for a moral purpose that the thing was revealed at all; and that purpose is a sense of gratitude and obligation. This was the use which the apostles of our Lord, who knew the most, made of their knowledge. This was the turn they gave to their meditations upon the subject; the impression it left upon their hearts. That a great and happy Being should voluntarily

enter the world in a mean and low condition, and humble himself to a death upon the cross, that is, to be executed as a malefactor, in order, by whatever means it was done, to promote the attainment of salvation to mankind, and to each and every one of themselves, was a theme they dwelt upon with feelings of the warmest thankfulness; because they were feelings proportioned to the magnitude of the benefit. Earthly benefits are nothing compared with those which are heavenly. That *they* felt from the bottom of their souls. That, in my opinion, we do not feel as we ought. But feeling this, they never cease to testify, to acknowledge, to express the deepest obligation, the most devout consciousness of that obligation to their Lord and Master; to him whom, for what he had done and suffered, they regarded as the finisher of their faith, and the author of their salvation.

SERMON XIX.

(PART II.)

ALL STAND IN NEED OF A REDEEMER.

Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.—Hebrews ix. 26.

In a former discourse upon this text I have shown, first, That the Scriptures expressly state the death of Jesus Christ as having an efficacy in the procurement of human salvation, which is not attributed to the death or sufferings of any other person, however patiently undergone, or undeservedly inflicted; and farther, it appears that this efficacy is quite consistent with our obligation to obedience; that good works still remain the condition of salvation, though not the cause; the cause being the mercy of Almighty God through Jesus Christ. There is no man living, perhaps, who has considered seriously the state of his soul, to whom this is not a consoling doctrine, and a grateful truth. But there are some situations of mind which dispose us to feel the weight and importance of this doctrine more than others. These situations I will endeavour to describe; and, in doing so, to point out how much more satisfactory it is to have a Saviour and Redeemer, and the mercies of our Creator excited towards us, and communicated to us by and through that Saviour and Redeemer, to confide in and rely upon, than any grounds of merit in ourselves.

First, then, souls which are really labouring and endeavouring after salvation, and with sincerity—such souls are every hour made sensible, deeply sensible, of the deficiency and imperfection of their endeavours. Had they no ground, therefore, for hope, but *merit*, that is to say, could they look for nothing more than what they should strictly *deserve*, their prospect would be very uncomfortable. I see not how they could look for *heaven* at all. They may form a conception of a virtue and obedience which might seem to be entitled to a high reward; but when they come to review their own performances, and to compare them with that conception; when they see how short they have proved of what they ought to have been, and of what they might have been, how weak and broken were their best offices; they will be the first to confess, that it is infinitely for their comfort that they have some other resource than their own righteousness. One infallible effect of sincerity in our endeavours is, to beget in us a knowledge of our imperfections. The careless, the heedless, the thoughtless, the nominal Christian, feels no want of a Saviour, an intercessor, a mediator, because he feels not his own defects. Try in earnest to perform the duties of religion, and you will soon learn how incomplete your best performances are. I can hardly mention a branch of our duty, which is not liable to be both impure in the motive, and imperfect in the execution; or a branch of our duty in which our endeavours can found their hopes of acceptance upon any thing but extended mercy, and the efficacy of those means and causes which have procured it to be so extended.

In the first place, is not this the case with our acts of piety and devotion? We may admit, that pure and perfect piety has a natural title to reward at the hand of God. But is ours ever such? To be pure in its motive, it ought to proceed from a sense of God Almighty's goodness towards us, and from no other source, or cause, or motive whatsoever. Whereas even pious, comparatively pious men, will acknowledge that authority, custom, decency, imitation, have a share in most of their religious exercises, and that they cannot warrant any of their devotions to be entirely independent of these causes. I would not speak disparagingly of the considerations here recited. They are oftentimes necessary inducements, and they may be the means of bringing us to better; but still it is true, that devotion is not pure in its origin, unless it flow from a sense of God Almighty's goodness, unmixed with any other reason. But if our worship of God be defective in its principle, and often debased by the mixture of impure motives, it is still more deficient, when we come to regard it in its performances. Our devotions are broken and interrupted, or they are cold and languid. Worldly thoughts intrude themselves upon them. Our worldly heart is tied down to the earth. Our devotions are unworthy of God. We lift not up our hearts unto him. Our treasure is upon earth, and our hearts are with our treasure. That heavenly-mindedness which ought to be inseparable from religious exercises does not accompany ours; at least not constantly. I speak not now of the hypocrite in religion, of him who only makes a show of it. His case comes not within our present consideration. I speak of those who are sincere men. These feel the imperfection of their services, and will acknowledge that I have not stated it more strongly than what is true. Imperfection cleaves to every part of it. Our thankfulness is never what it ought to be, or any thing like it; and it is only when we have some particular reason for being pleased that we are thankful at all. Formality is apt continually to steal upon us in our worship: more especially in our public worship; and formality takes away the immediate consciousness of what we are doing; which consciousness is the very life of devotion; all that we do without it being a dead ceremony.

No man reviews his services towards God, his religious services, but he perceives in them much to be forgiven, much to be excused; great unworthiness as respecting the object of all worship;

much deficiency and imperfection to be passed over, before our service can be deemed in its nature an acceptable service. That such services, therefore, should, in fact, be allowed and accepted, and that to no less an end and purpose than the attainment of heaven, is an act of abounding grace and goodness in Him who accepts them; and we are taught in Scripture, that this so much wanted grace and goodness abounds towards us through Jesus Christ; and particularly through his sufferings and his death.

But to pass from our acts of worship, which form a particular part only of our duty to God; to pass from these to our general duty, what, let us ask, is that duty? What is our duty towards God? No other, our Saviour himself tells us, than "to love him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind:" Luke x. 27. Are we conscious of such love to such a degree? If we are not, then, in a most fundamental duty, we fail of being what we ought to be. Here, then, as before, is a call for pardoning mercy on the part of God; which mercy is extended to us by the intervention of Jesus Christ; at least so the Scriptures represent it.

In our duties towards one another, it may be said, that our performances are more adequate to our obligation, than in our duties to God; that the subjects of them lie more level with our capacity; and there may be truth in this observation. But still I am afraid, that both in principle and execution our performances are not only defective, but defective in a degree which we are not sufficiently aware of. The rule laid down for us is this, "to love our neighbour *as* ourselves." Which rule, in fact, enjoins, that our benevolence be as strong as our self-interest: that we be as anxious to do good, as quick to discover, as eager to embrace every opportunity of doing it, and as active, and resolute, and persevering in our endeavours to do it, as we are anxious for ourselves, and active in the pursuit of our own interest. Now is this the case with us? Wherein it is not, we fall below our rule. In the apostles of Jesus Christ, to whom this rule was given from his own mouth, you may read how it operated; and their example proves, what some deny, the possibility of the thing; namely, of benevolence being as strong a motive as self-interest. They firmly believed, that to bring men to the knowledge of Christ's religion was the greatest possible good that could be done unto them; was the highest act of benevolence they could exercise. And, accordingly, they set about this work, and carried it on with as much energy, as much order, as much perseverance, through as great toils and labours, as many sufferings and difficulties, as any person ever pursued a scheme for their own interest, or for the making of a fortune. They could not possibly have done more for their own sakes than what they did for the sake of others. They literally loved their neighbours as themselves. Some have followed their example in this; and some have, in zeal and energy, followed their example in other methods of doing good. For I do not mean to say, that the particular method of usefulness, which the office of the apostles cast upon them, is the only method, or that it is a method even competent to many. Doing good, without any selfish worldly motive for doing it, is the grand thing: the mode must be regulated by opportunity and occasion. To which may be added, that in those whose power of doing good, according to any mode, is small, the principle of benevolence will at least restrain them from doing harm. If the principle be subsisting in their hearts, it will have this operation at least. I ask therefore again, as I asked before, are we as solicitous to seize opportunities, to look out for and embrace occasions of doing good, as we are certainly solicitous to lay hold of opportunities of making advantage to ourselves, and to embrace all occasions of profit and self-interest? Nay, is benevolence strong enough to hold our hand, when stretched out for mischief? is it always sufficient to make us consider what misery we are producing, whilst we are compassing a selfish end, or gratifying a lawless passion of our own? Do the two principles of benevolence and self-interest possess any degree of parallelism and equality in our hearts, and in our conduct? If they do, then so far we come up to our rule. Wherein they do not, as I said before, we fall below it.

When not only the generality of mankind, but even those who are endeavouring to do their duty, apply the standard to themselves, they are made to learn the humiliating lesson of their own deficiency. That such our deficiency should be overlooked, so as not to become the loss to us of happiness after death; that our poor, weak, humble endeavours to comply with our Saviour's rule should be received and not rejected;—I say, if we hope for this, we must hope for it, not on the ground of congruity or desert, which it will not bear, but from the extreme benignity of a merciful God, and the availing mediation of a Redeemer. You will observe that I am still, and have been all along, speaking of sincere men, of those who are in earnest in their duty, and in religion; and I say, upon the strength of what has been alleged, that even these persons, when they read in Scripture of the riches of the goodness of God, of the powerful efficacy of the death of Christ, of his mediation and continual intercession, know and feel in their hearts that they stand in need of them all.

In that remaining class of duties, which are called duties to ourselves, the observation we have made upon the deficiency of our endeavours applies with equal or with greater force. More is here wanted than the mere command of our actions. The heart itself is to be regulated; the hardest thing in this world to manage. The affections and passions are to be kept in order; constant evil propensities are to be constantly opposed. I apprehend that every sincere man is conscious how unable he is to fulfil this part of his duty, even to his own satisfaction; and if our conscience accuse us, "God is greater than our conscience, and knoweth all things." If we see our sad failings, He must.

God forbid that any thing I say, either upon this or the other branches of our duty, should damp our endeavours. Let them be as vigorous and as steadfast as they can. They will be so if we are sincere; and without sincerity there is no hope; none whatever. But there will always be left enough, infinitely more than enough, to humble self-sufficiency.

Contemplate, then, what is placed before us—heaven. Understand what heaven is: a state of happiness after death; exceeding what, without experience, it is possible for us to conceive, and unlimited in duration. This is a reward in-

finitely beyond any thing we can pretend to, as of right, as merited, as due. Some distinction between us and others, between the comparatively good and the bad, might be expected; but on these grounds, not such a reward as this, even were our services, I mean the services of sincere men, perfect. But such services as ours, in truth, are, such services as, in fact, we perform, so poor, so deficient, so broken, so mixed with alloy, so imperfect both in principle and execution, what have they to look for upon their own foundation? When, therefore, the Scriptures speak to us of a redeemer, a mediator, an intercessor for us; when they display and magnify the exceeding great mercies of God, as set forth in the salvation of man, according to any mode whatever which he might be pleased to appoint, and therefore in that mode which the Gospel holds forth; they teach us no other doctrine than that to which the actual deficiencies of our duty and a just consciousness and acknowledgment of these deficiencies, must naturally carry our own minds. What we feel in ourselves corresponds with what we read in Scripture.

SERMON XX.

THE EFFICACY OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST CONSISTENT WITH THE NECESSITY OF A GOOD LIFE: THE ONE BEING THE CAUSE, THE OTHER THE CONDITION OF SALVATION.

What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.—Romans vi. 1.

THE same Scriptures which represent the death of Christ as having that which belongs to the death of no other person, namely, an efficacy in procuring the salvation of man, are also constant and uniform in representing the necessity of our own endeavours, of our own good works for the same purpose. They go further. They foresaw that in stating, and still more when they went about to extol and magnify the death of Christ, as instrumental to salvation, they were laying a foundation for the opinion, that men's own works, their own virtue, their personal endeavours, were superseded and dispensed with. In proportion as the sacrifice of the death of Christ was effectual, in the same proportion were these less necessary: if the death of Christ was sufficient, if redemption was complete, then were these not necessary at all. They foresaw that some would draw this consequence from their doctrine, and they provided against it.

It is observable, that the same consequence might be deduced from the goodness of God in any way of representing it: not only in the particular and peculiar way in which it is represented in the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ, but in any other way. St. Paul, for one, was sensible of this, and therefore, when he speaks of the goodness of God, even in general terms, he takes care to point out the only true turn which ought to be given to it in our thoughts—"Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" as if he had said,—With thee, I perceive, that the consideration of the goodness of God, leads to the allowing of thyself in sin: this is not to know what that consideration ought in truth to lead to: it ought to lead thee to repentance, and to no other conclusion.

Again: When the apostle had been speaking of the righteousness of God displayed by the wickedness of man; he was not unaware of the misconstruction to which this representation was liable, and which it had, in fact, experienced: which misconstruction he states thus,—"We be slanderously reported, and some affirm, that we say, let us do evil that good may come." This insinuation, however, he regards as nothing less than an unfair and wilful perversion of his words, and of the words of other Christian teachers: therefore he says concerning those who did thus pervert them, "their condemnation is just:" they will be justly condemned for thus abusing the doctrine which we teach. The passage, however, clearly shows, that the application of their expressions to the encouragement of licentiousness of life, was an application contrary to their intention; and, in fact, a perversion of their words.

In like manner in the same chapter, our apostle had no sooner laid down the doctrine, that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," than he checks himself, as it were, by subjoining this proviso: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Whatever he meant by his assertion concerning faith, he takes care to let them know he did not mean this, "to make void the law," or to dispense with obedience.

But the clearest text to our purpose is that, undoubtedly, which I have prefixed to this discourse. Saint Paul, after expatiating largely upon the "grace," that is, the favour, kindness, and mercy of God, the extent, the greatness, the comprehensiveness of that mercy, as manifested in the Christian dispensation, puts this question to his reader—"What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" which he answers by a strong negative—"God forbid." What the apostle designed in this passage is sufficiently evident. He knew in what manner some might be apt to construe his expressions; and he anticipates their mistake. He is beforehand with them, by protesting against any such use being made of his doctrine; which, yet he was aware, might by possibility be made.

By way of showing scripturally the obligation and the necessity of personal endeavours after virtue, all the numerous texts which exhort to virtue, and admonish us against vice, might be quoted; for they are all directly to the purpose: that is we might quote every page of the New Testament. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."—In both these texts the reward attends the *doing:* the promise is annexed to works. Again: "To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, tribulation, and anguish upon every soul of man *that doeth evil.*" Again: "Of the which," namely, certain enumerated vices, "I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the king-

dom of God." These are a few amongst many texts of the same effect, and they are such as can never be got over. Stronger terms cannot be devised than what are here used. Were the purpose, therefore, simply to prove from Scripture the necessity of virtue, and the danger of vice, so far as salvation is concerned, these texts are decisive. But when an answer is to be given to those, who so interpret certain passages of the apostolic writings, especially the passages which speak of the efficacy of the death of Christ, or draw such inferences from these passages, as amount to a dispensing with the obligations of virtue; then the best method of proving, that theirs cannot be a right interpretation, nor theirs just inferences, is by showing, which fortunately, we are able to do, that it is the very interpretation, and these the very inferences, which the apostles were themselves aware of, which they provided against, and which they protested against. The four texts, quoted from the apostolic writings in this discourse, were quoted with this view: and they may be considered, I think, as showing the minds of the authors upon the point in question more determinately than any general exhortation to good works, or any general denunciation against sin could do. I assume, therefore, as a proved point, that whatever was said by the apostles concerning the efficacy of the death of Christ, was said by them under an apprehension that they did not thereby in any manner relax the motives, the obligation, or the necessity of good works. But still there is another important question behind; namely, whether, notwithstanding what the apostles have said, or may have meant to say, there be not, in the nature of things, an invincible inconsistency between the efficacy of the death of Christ, and the necessity of a good life; whether those two propositions can, in fair reasoning, stand together; or whether it does not necessarily follow, that if the death of Christ be efficacious, then good works are no longer necessary; and, on the other hand, that if good works be still necessary, then is the death of Christ not efficacious.

Now, to give an account of this question, and of the difficulty which it seems to present, we must bear in mind, that in the business of salvation there are naturally and properly two things, *viz.* the cause and the condition; and that these two things are different. We should see better the propriety of this distinction, if we would allow ourselves to consider well *what salvation is:* what the being saved means. It is nothing less than, after this life is ended, being placed in a state of happiness exceedingly great, both in degree and duration; a state, concerning which the following things are said: "the sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed." "God hath in store for us such things as pass man's understanding." So that, you see, it is not simply escaping punishment, simply being excused or forgiven, simply being compensated or repaid for the little good we do, but it is infinitely more. Heaven is infinitely greater than mere compensation, which natural religion itself might lead us to expect. What do the Scriptures call it? "Glory, honour, immortality, eternal life." "To them that seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." Will any one then contend, that salvation in this sense, and to this extent; that heaven, eternal life, glory, honour, immortality; that a happiness such as that there is no way of describing it, but by saying that it surpasses human comprehension, that it casts the sufferings of this life at such a distance, as not to bear any comparison with it: will any one contend, that this is no more than what virtue deserves, what, in its own proper nature, and by its own merit, it is entitled to look forward to, and to receive? The greatest virtue that man ever attained has no such pretensions. The best good action that man ever performed has no claim to this extent, or any thing like it. It is out of all calculation, and comparison, and proportion above, and more than any human works can possibly deserve.

To what then are we to ascribe it, that endeavours after virtue should procure, and that they will, in fact, procure, to those who sincerely exert them, such immense blessings? To what, but to the voluntary bounty of Almighty God, who, in his inexpressible good pleasure, hath appointed it so to be! The benignity of God towards man hath made him this inconceivably advantageous offer. But a most kind offer may still be a conditional offer. And this, though an infinitely gracious and beneficial offer, is still a conditional offer, and the performance of the conditions is as necessary as if it had been an offer of mere retribution. The kindness, the bounty, the generosity of the offer, do not make it less necessary to perform the conditions, but more so. A conditional offer may be infinitely kind on the part of the benefactor who makes it, may be infinitely beneficial to those to whom it is made. If it be from a prince or governor, may be infinitely gracious and merciful on his part; and yet, being conditional, the condition is as necessary, as if the offer had been no more than that of scanty wages by a hard taskmaster.

In considering this matter *in general*, the whole of it appears to be very plain; yet, when we apply the consideration to religion, there are two mistakes into which we are very liable to fall. The first is, that when we hear so much of the exceedingly great kindness of the offer, we are apt to infer, that the conditions upon which it was made, will not be exacted. Does that at all follow? Because the offer, even with these conditions, is represented to be the fruit of love, and mercy, and kindness, and is in truth so, and is most justly so to be accounted, does it follow that the conditions of the offer are not necessary to be performed? This is one error into which we slide, against which we ought to guard ourselves most diligently; for it is not simply false in its principle, but most pernicious in its application; its application always being to countenance us in some sin which we will not relinquish. The second mistake is, that when we have performed the conditions, or think that we have performed the conditions, or when we endeavour to perform the conditions, upon which the reward is offered, we forthwith attribute our obtaining the reward to this our performance or endeavour, and not to that which is the beginning and foundation, and cause of the whole, the true and proper cause, namely, the kindness and bounty of the original offer. This turn of thought likewise, as well as the former, it is necessary to warn you against. For it has these consequences; it damps our gratitude to God, it takes off our attention from Him.

Some, who allow the necessity of good works to salvation, are not willing that they should be called

conditions of salvation. But this, I think, is a distinction too refined for common Christian apprehension. If they be necessary to salvation, they are conditions of salvation, so far as I can see. It is a question, however, not now before us.

But to return to the immediate subject of our discourse. Our observations have carried us thus far; that in the business of human salvation there are two most momentous considerations, the cause and the conditions, and that these considerations are distinct. I now proceed to say, that there is no inconsistency between the efficacy of the death of Christ and the necessity of a holy life, (by which I mean sincere endeavours after holiness;) because the first, the death of Christ, relates to the cause of salvation; the second, namely, good works, respects the conditions of salvation; and that the cause of salvation is one thing, the conditions another.

The cause of salvation is the free will, the free gift, the love and mercy of God. That alone is the source, and fountain, and cause of salvation; the origin from which it springs, from which all our hopes of attaining to it are derived. This cause is not in ourselves, nor in any thing we do, or can do, but in God, in his good will and pleasure. It is, as we have before shown, in the graciousness of the original offer. Therefore, whatever shall have moved and excited, and conciliated that good will and pleasure, so as to have procured that offer to be made, or shall have formed any part or portion of the motive from which it was made, may most truly and properly be said to be efficacious in human salvation.

This efficacy is in Scripture attributed to the death of Christ. It is attributed in a variety of ways of expression, but this is the substance of them all. He is "a sacrifice, an offering to God; a propitiation; the precious sacrifice foreordained; the lamb slain from the foundation of the world; the lamb which taketh away the sin of the world. We are washed in his blood; we are justified by his blood; we are saved from wrath through him; he hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." All these terms, and many more that are used, assert in substance the same thing, namely, the efficacy of the death of Christ in the procuring of human salvation. To give to these expressions their proper moment and import, it is necessary to reflect, over and over again, and by reflection to impress our minds with a just idea, what and how great a thing salvation is; for it is by means of that idea alone, that we can ever come to be sensible, how unspeakably important, how inestimable in value, any efficacy which operates upon that event must be to us all. The highest terms in which the Scriptures speak of that efficacy are not too great: cannot be too great; because it respects an interest and an event so vast, so momentous, as to make all other interests, and all other events, in comparison contemptible.

The sum of our argument is briefly this. There may appear, and to many there has appeared, to be an inconsistency or incompatibility between the efficacy of the death of Christ, and the necessity of sincere endeavours after obedience. When the subject is properly examined, there turns out to be no such incompatibility. The graciousness of an offer does not diminish the necessity of the condition. Suppose a prince to promise to one of his subjects, upon compliance with certain terms, and the performance of certain duties, a reward, in magnitude and value, out of all competition beyond the merit of the compliance, the desert of the performance; to what shall such a subject ascribe the happiness held out to him? He is an ungrateful man, if he attribute it to any cause whatever, but to the bounty and goodness of his prince in making him the offer; or if he suffer any consideration, be it what it will, to interfere with, or diminish his sense of that bounty and goodness. Still it is true, that he will not obtain what is offered, unless he comply with the terms. So far his compliance is a condition of his happiness. But the grand thing is the offer being made at all. That is the ground and origin of the whole. That is the *cause*; and is ascribable to favour, grace, and goodness, on the part of the prince, and to nothing else. It would, therefore, be the last degree of ingratitude in such a subject, to forget his prince while he thought of himself; to forget the *cause*, whilst he thought of the condition; to regard every thing promised as merited. The generosity, the kindness, the voluntariness, the bounty of the original offer, come by this means to be neglected in his mind entirely. This, in my opinion, describes our situation with respect to God. The love, goodness, and grace of God, in making us a tender of salvation, and the effects of the death of Christ, do not diminish the necessity or the obligation of the condition of the tender, which is sincere endeavours after holiness; nor are in any wise inconsistent with such obligation.

SERMON XXI.

PURE RELIGION.

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.—James i. 27.

Nothing can be more useful than summary views of our duty, if they be well drawn and rightly understood. It is a great advantage to have our business laid before us altogether; to see at one comprehensive glance, as it were, what we are to do, and what we are not to do. It would be a great ease and satisfaction to both, if it were possible for a master to give his servant directions for his conduct in a single sentence, which he, the servant, had only to apply and draw out into practice, as occasions offered themselves, in order to discharge every thing which was required or expected from him. This, which is not practicable in civil life, is in a good degree so in a religious life; because a religious life proceeds more upon principle, leaving the exercise and manifestation of that principle more to the judgment of the individual, than it can be left where, from the nature of the case, one man is to act precisely according to another man's direction.

But then, as I have said, it is essentially necessary that these summaries be well drawn up, and rightly understood; because if they profess to state the whole of men's duties, yet, in fact, state them partially and imperfectly, all who read them are misled, and dangerously misled. In religion, as in other things, we are too apt of ourselves to

substitute a part for the whole. Substituting a part for the whole is the grand tendency of human corruption, in matters both of morality and religion; which propensity therefore will be encouraged, when that, which professes to exhibit the whole of religion, does not, in truth, exhibit the whole. What is *there* omitted, we shall omit, glad of the occasion and excuse. What is not set down as our duty, we shall not think ourselves obliged to perform, not caring to increase the weight of our own burden. This is the case whenever we use summaries of religion, which, in truth, are imperfect or ill drawn. But there is another case more common, and productive of the same effect, and that is, when we misconstrue these summary accounts of our duty; principally when we conceive of them as intending to express more than they were really intended to express. For then it comes to pass, that although they be right and perfect as to what they were intended for, yet they are wrong and imperfect as to what we construe and conceive them for. This observation is particularly applicable to the text. St. James is here describing religion not in its principle, but in its effects; and these *effects* are truly and justly and fully displayed. They are by the apostle made to consist of two large articles; in succouring the distress of others, and maintaining our own innocency. And these two articles do comprehend the whole of the effects of true religion, which were exactly what the apostle meant to describe. Had St. James intended to have set forth the motives and principles of religion as they ought to subsist in the heart of a Christian, I doubt not but he would have mentioned love to God, and faith in Jesus Christ; for from these must spring every thing good and acceptable in our actions. In natural objects it is one thing to describe the root of a plant, and another its fruits and flowers; and, if we think a writer is describing the roots and fibres, when, in truth, he is describing the fruit or flowers, we shall mistake his meaning, and our mistake must produce great confusion. So in spiritual affairs, it is one thing to set before us the principle of religion, and another the effects of it. These are not to be confounded. And if we apply a description to one which was intended for the other, we deal unfairly by the writer of the description, and erroneously by ourselves. Therefore, first, let no one suppose the love of God, the thinking of him, the being grateful to him, the fearing to disobey him, not to be necessary parts of true religion, because they are not mentioned in St. James's account of true religion. The answer is, that these compose the principles of true religion; St. James's account relates to the effects. In like manner concerning faith in Jesus Christ. St. James has recorded his opinion upon that subject. His doctrine is, that the tree which bears no fruit cannot be sound at the root; that the faith which is unproductive is not the right faith; but then this is allowing (and not denying,) that a right faith is the source and spring of true virtue; and had our apostle been asked to state the principle of religion, I am persuaded he would have referred us to a true faith. But that was not the inquiry; on the contrary, having marked strongly the futility of faith, which produced no good effects upon life and action, he proceeds in the text to tell us what the effects are which it ought to produce; and these he disposes into two comprehensive classes, (but still meaning to describe the effects of religion, and not its root or principle,) positive virtue and personal innocence.

Now, I say, that for the purpose for which it was intended, the account given by St. James is full and complete. And it carries with it this peculiar advantage, that it very specially guards against an error, natural, I believe, and common in all ages of the world; which is, the making beneficence an apology for licentiousness; the thinking that doing good occasionally may excuse us from strictness in regulating our passions and desires. The text expressly cuts up this excuse, because it expressly asserts both things to be necessary to compose true religion. Where two things are necessary, one cannot excuse the want of the other. Now, what does the text teach? it teaches us what pure and undefiled religion is in its effects and in its practice: and what is it? "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Not simply to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction; that is not all; that is not sufficient; but likewise "to keep himself unspotted from the world."

To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, is describing a class or species, or kind of virtue, by singling out one eminent example of it. I consider the apostle as meaning to represent the value, and to enforce the obligation of active charity, of positive beneficence, and that he has done it by mentioning a particular instance. A stronger or properer instance could not have been selected; but still it is to be regarded as an instance, not as exclusive of other and similar instances, but as a specimen of these exertions. The case before us, as an instance, is heightened by every circumstance which could give to it weight and priority. The apostle exhibits the most forlorn and destitute of the human species, suffering under the severest of human losses; helpless children deprived of a parent, a wife bereaved of her husband, both sunk in affliction, under the sharpest anguish of their misfortunes. To visit, by which is meant to console, to comfort, to succour, to relieve, to assist such as these, is undoubtedly a high exercise of religion and benevolence, and well selected; but still it is to be regarded as an example, and the whole class of beneficent virtues as intended to be included. This is not only a just and fair, but a necessary construction; because, although the exercise of beneficence be a duty upon every man, yet the kind, the examples of it, must be guided in a great degree by each man's faculties, opportunities, and by the occasions which present themselves. If such an occasion, as that which the text describes, presents itself, it cannot be overlooked without an abandonment of religion; but if other and different occasions of doing good present themselves, they also, according to the spirit of our apostle's declaration, must be attended to, or we are wanting in the fruit of the same faith.

The second principal expression of the text, "to keep himself unspotted from the world," signifies the being clean and clear from the licentious practices to which the world is addicted. So that "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father," consists in two things; beneficence and purity; doing good and keeping clear from sin. Not in one thing, but in two things; not in one without the other, but in both. And this, in my

opinion, is a great lesson and a most important doctrine.

I shall not, at present, consider the case of those who are anxious, and effectually so, to maintain their personal innocency without endeavouring to do good to others; because I really believe it is not a common case. I think that the religious principle which is able to make men confine their passions and desires within the bounds of virtue, is, with very few exceptions, strong enough, at the same time to prompt and put them upon active exertions.

Therefore, I would rather apply myself to that part of the case which is more common, active exertions of benevolence, accompanied with looseness of private morals. It is a very common character; but, I say, in the first place, it is an inconsistent character; it is doing and undoing; killing and curing; doing good by our charity, and mischief by our licentiousness: voluntarily relieving misery with one hand, and voluntarily producing and spreading it with the other. No real advance is made in human happiness by this contradiction; no real betterness or improvement promoted.

But then, may not the harm a man does by his personal vices be much less than the good he does by his active virtues? This is a point, in which there is large room for delusion and mistake. Positive charity and acts of humanity are often of a conspicuous nature, naturally and deservedly engaging the praises of mankind, which are followed by our own. No one does, no one ought to speak against them, or attempt to disparage them; but the effect of vice and licentiousness, not only in their immediate consequences, but in their remote and ultimate tendencies, which ought all to be included in the account; the mischief which is done by the example, as well as by the act, is seldom honestly computed by the sinner himself. But I do not dwell further upon this comparison, because I insist, that no man has a right to make it; no man has a right, whilst he is doing occasional good, and yet indulging his vices and his passions, to strike a balance, as it were, between the good and the harm. This is not Christianity; this is not pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father, let the balance lie on which side it will. For our text declares, (and our text declares no more than what the Scriptures testify from one end to the other,) that religion demands both. It demands active virtue, and it demands innocency of life. I mean it demands sincere and vigorous endeavours in the pursuit of active virtue, and endeavours equally sincere and firm in the preservation of personal innocence. It makes no calculation which is better; but it requires both.

Shall it be extraordinary, that there should be men forward in active charity and in positive beneficence, who yet put little or no constraint upon their personal vices? I have said that the character is common, and I will tell you why it is common. The reason is, (and there is no other reason,) that it is usually an easier thing to perform acts of beneficence, even of expensive and troublesome beneficence, than it is to command and control our passions; to give up and discard our vices; to burst the bonds of the habits which enslave us. This is the very truth of the case; so that the matter comes precisely to this point. Men of active benevolence, but of loose morals, are men who are for performing the duties which are easy to them, and omitting those which are hard. They may place their own character to themselves in what view they please; but this is the truth of the case, and let any one say, whether this be religion; whether this be sufficient. The truly religious man, when he has once decided a thing to be a duty, has no farther question to ask; whether it be easy to be done, or whether it be hard to be done, it is equally a duty. It then becomes a question of fortitude, of resolution, of firmness, of self-command, and self-government; but not of duty or obligation; these are already decided upon.

But least of all, (and this is the inference from the text, which I wish most to press upon your attention,) least of all does he conceive the hope of reaching heaven by that sort of compromise, which would make easy, nay perhaps pleasant duties, an excuse for duties which are irksome and severe. To recur, for the last time, to the instance mentioned in our text, I can very well believe that a man of humane temper shall have pleasure in visiting, when by visiting he can succour, the fatherless and the widow in their affliction: but if he believes St. James, he will find that this must be joined to and accompanied with another thing, which is neither easy nor pleasant, nay, must almost always be effected with pain and struggle, and mortification, and difficulty,—the "keeping himself unspotted from the world."

SERMON XXII.

THE AGENCY OF JESUS CHRIST SINCE HIS ASCENSION.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.—Hebrews xiii. 8.

The assertion of the text might be supported by the consideration, that the mission and preaching of Christ have lost nothing of their truth and importance by the lapse of ages which has taken place since his appearance in the world. If they seem of less magnitude, reality, and concern to us at this present day, than they did to those who lived in the days in which they were carried on; it is only in the same manner as a mountain or a tower appears to be less, when seen at a distance. It is a delusion in both cases. In natural objects we have commonly strength enough of judgment to prevent our being imposed upon by these false appearances; and it is not so much a want or defect of, as it is a neglecting to exert and use our judgment, if we suffer ourselves to be deceived by them in religion. Distance of space in one case, and distance of time in the other, make no difference in the real nature of the object; and it is a great weakness to allow them to make any difference in our estimate and apprehension. The death of Jesus Christ is, in truth, as interesting to *us*, as it was to those who stood by his cross; his resurrection from the grave is a pledge and assurance of *our* future resurrection, no less than it was of theirs who conversed, who eat and drank with him, after his return to life.

But there is another sense, in which it is still more materially true that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He is personally living, and acting in the same manner; has been so all along, and will be so to the end of the world. He is the same in his person, in his power, in his office.

First, I say, that he is the same individual person, and is at this present time existing, living, acting. He is gone up on high. The clouds, at his ascension, received him out of human sight. But whither did he go? to sit for ever at the right hand of God. This is expressly declared concerning him. It is also declared of him, that death hath no more dominion over him, that he is no more to return to corruption. So that, since his ascension, he hath continued in heaven to live and act. His human body, we are likewise given to believe, was changed upon his ascension, that is, was glorified, whereby it became fitted for heaven, and fitted for immortality; no longer liable to decay or age, but thenceforward remaining literally and strictly the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. This change in the human person of Christ is in effect asserted, or rather is referred to, as a thing already known, in that text of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, wherein we are assured, that hereafter Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body. Now, the natural body of Christ, before his resurrection at least, was like the natural body of other men; was not a glorious body. At this time, therefore, when Saint Paul calls it his glorious body, (for it was after his ascension that Saint Paul wrote these words,) it must have undergone a great change. In this exalted and glorified state our Lord was seen by Saint Stephen, in the moment of his martyrdom. Being full, you read, of the Holy Ghost, Stephen looked up steadfastly unto heaven, and saw the glory of God,* and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. At that seemingly dreadful moment, even when the martyr was surrounded by a band of assassins, with stones ready in their hands to stone him to death, the spectacle, nevertheless, filled his soul with rapture. He cried out in ecstasy, "Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." The same glorious vision was vouchsafed to Saint Paul at his conversion; and to Saint John, at the delivery of the revelations. This change of our Lord's body was a change, we have reason to believe, of nature and substance, so as to be thenceforward incapable of decay or dissolution. It might be susceptible of any external form, which the particular purpose of his appearance should require. So when he appeared to Stephen and Paul, or to any of his saints, it was necessary he should assume the form which he had born in the flesh, that he might be known to them. But it is not necessary to suppose that he was confined to that form. The contrary rather appears in the revelation of Saint John, in which, after once showing himself to the apostle, our Lord was afterwards represented to his eyes under different forms. All, however, that is of importance to us to know, all that belongs to our present subject to observe, is, that Christ's glorified person was incapable of dying any more; that it continues at this day; that it hath all along continued the same real, identical being, as that which went up into heaven in the sight of his apostles; the same essential nature, the same glorified substance, the same proper person.

But, secondly, He is the same also in power. The Scripture doctrine concerning our Lord seems to be this, that when his appointed commission and his sufferings were closed upon earth, he was advanced in heaven to a still higher state than what he possessed before he came into the world.* This point, as well as the glory of his nature, both before and after his appearance in the flesh, is attested by Saint Paul, in the second chapter of his Epistle to the Philippians. "Being in the form of God he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He did not affect to be equal with God, or to appear with divine honours (for such is the sense which the words in the original will bear,) "but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore," *i. e.* for this his obedience even to the last extremity, even unto death, "God also hath highly exalted him;" or, as it is distinctly and perspicuously expressed in the original, "God also hath *more* highly exalted him," that is, to a higher state than what he even before possessed; insomuch that he hath "given him a name which is above every name: that *at*," or, more properly, *in*, "the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father;" exactly agreeable to what our Lord himself declared to his disciples after his resurrection,—"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth:" Matt. xxviii. 18. You will observe in this passage of Saint Paul, not only the magnificent terms in which Christ's exaltation is described, *viz.* "that every knee should thenceforward bow in his name, and that every tongue should confess him to be the Lord;" but you will observe also, the comprehension and extent of his dominion, "of things in heaven, of things on earth, of things under the earth." And that we are specifically comprised under this authority and this agency, either of the two following texts may be brought as a sufficient proof: "Where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst of you;" Matt. xviii. 20; which words of our Lord imply a knowledge of, an observation of, an attention to, and an interference with, what passes amongst his disciples upon earth. Or take his final words to his followers, as recorded by Saint Matthew: "Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world," and they carry the same implication. And, lastly, that, in the most awful scene and event of our existence, the day of judgment, we shall not only become the objects, but the immediate objects of Christ's power and agency, is set forth in two clear and positive texts: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God," John v. 25, not the voice of God, but the voice of the Son of God. And then, pursuing the description of what will afterwards take place, our Lord adds, in the next verse but one, "that the Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man:" which is in perfect conformity with what Saint Paul announced to the Athenians, as a great and new doctrine, namely, "that God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained,

* The "glory of God," in Scripture, when spoken of as an object of vision, always, I think, means a luminous appearance, bright and refulgent, beyond the splendour of any natural object whatever.

* See Sherlock's Serm. on Phil. ii. 9.

whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Having shown that the power of Jesus Christ is a subsisting power at this time, the next question is, as to its duration. Now so far as it respects mankind in this present world, we are assured that it shall continue until the end of the world. The same texts which have been adduced prove this point, as well as that for which they were quoted; and they are confirmed by Saint Paul's declaration, 1 Cor. xv. 24,—"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father:" therefore he shall retain and exercise it until *then*. But farther, this power is not only perpetual, but progressive; advancing and proceeding by different steps and degrees, until it shall become supreme and complete, and shall prevail against every enemy and every opposition. That our Lord's dominion will not only remain unto the end of the world, but that its effects in the world will be greatly enlarged and increased, is signified very expressly in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The apostle in this passage applies to our Lord a quotation from the Psalms: "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet;" and then draws from it a strict inference; "for in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that he did not put under him." And then he remarks, as a fact, "but now we see *not yet* all things put under him." That complete entire subjection, which is here promised, hath not yet taken place. The promise must, therefore, refer to a still future order of things. This doctrine of the progressive increase, and final completeness of our Lord's kingdom, is also virtually laid down in the passage from the Corinthians already cited: "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." For that this subjugation of his several enemies will be successive, one after another, is strongly intimated by the expression, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Now, to apprehend the probability of these things coming to pass, or rather to remove any opinion of their improbability, we ought constantly to bear in our mind this momentous truth, that in the hands of the Deity time is nothing; that he has eternity to act in. The Christian dispensation, nay, the world itself, may be in its infancy. A more perfect display of the power of Christ, and of his religion, may be in reserve; and the ages which it may endure, after the obstacles and impediments to its reception are removed, may be, beyond comparison, longer than those which we have seen, in which it has been struggling with great difficulties, most especially with ignorance and prejudice. We ought not to be moved any more than the apostles were moved, with the reflection which was cast upon their mission, that since the "fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were." We ought to return the answer which one of them returned, that what we call tardiness in the Deity, is not so; that our so thinking it arises from not allowing for the different importance, nay, probably, for the different apprehension of time, in the divine mind and in ours; that with him a thousand years are as one day; words which confound and astonish human understanding, yet strictly and metaphysically true.

Again: We should remember that the apostles, the very persons who asserted that God *would* put all things under him, themselves, as we have seen, acknowledged that it was *not yet* done. In the mean time, from the whole of their declarations and of this discussion, we collect, that Jesus Christ ascended into the heavens, is, at this day, a great efficient Being in the universe, invested by his Father with a high authority, which he exercises, and will continue to exercise until the end of the world.

Thirdly, he is the same in his office. The principal offices assigned by the Scriptures to our Lord in his glorified state, that is, since his ascension into heaven, are those of a mediator and intercessor. Of the mediation of our Lord, the Scripture speaks in this wise: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:" 1 Tim. ii. 5. It was after our Lord's ascension that this was spoken of him; and it is plain from the form and turn of the expression, that his mediatorial character and office was meant to be represented as a perpetual character and office, because it is described in conjunction with the existence of God and men, so long as men exist; "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ."—"Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name:" "At that day ye shall ask in my name:" John xvi. 24, 26. These words form part of our Lord's memorable conversation with his select disciples, not many hours before his death; and clearly intimate the mediatorial office which he was to discharge after his ascension.

Concerning his *intercession*, not that which he occasionally exercised upon earth, when he prayed, as he did most fervently for his disciples, but that which he now at this present time exercises, we have the following text, explicit, satisfactory, and full: "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood:" by priesthood is here meant the office of praying for others. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us." No words can more plainly declare than these words do, the perpetuity of our Lord's agency; that it did not cease with his presence upon earth, but continues. "He continueth ever; he ever liveth; he hath an unchangeable priesthood." Surely this justifies what our text saith of him; that he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" and that not in a figurative or metaphorical sense, but literally, effectually, and really. Moreover, in this same passage, not only the constancy and perpetuity, but the power and efficacy of our Lord's intercession are asserted: "He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him." They must come unto God; they must come *by* him; and then he is able to save them completely.

These three heads of observation, namely, upon his person, his power, and his office, comprise the relation in which our Lord Jesus Christ stands to us, whilst we remain in this mortal life. There is another consideration of great solemnity and interest, namely, the relation which we shall bear to him in our future state. Now the economy which appears to be destined for the human creation, I mean, for that part of it which shall be received to future happiness, is, that they shall live in a state of local society with one another, and under Jesus Christ as their head; experiencing a sensible connexion amongst themselves, as well as

the operation of his authority, as their Lord and Governor. I think it likely that our Saviour had the state of things in view, when, in his final discourse with his apostles, he tells them: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also:" John xiv. 2, 3. And again, in the same discourse, and referring to the same economy, "Father," says he, "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me:" for that this was spoken, not merely of the twelve, who were then sitting with Jesus, and to whom his discourse was addressed, but of his disciples in future ages of the world, is fairly collected from his words, (John xvii. 20.) "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Since the prayer here stated was part of the discourse, it is reasonable to infer that the discourse, in its object, extended as far as the prayer, which we have seen to include believers, as well of succeeding ages as of that then present.

Now concerning this future dispensation, supposing it to consist, as here represented, of accepted spirits, participating of happiness in a state of sensible society with one another, and with Jesus Christ himself at their head, one train of reflection naturally arises; namely, first, that it is highly probable there should be many expressions of Scripture which have relation to it; secondly, that such expressions must, by their nature, appear to us, at present, under a considerable degree of obscurity, which we may be apt to call a defect; thirdly, that the credit due to such expressions must depend upon their authority as portions of the written word of God, and not upon the probability, much less upon the clearness of what they contain; so that our comprehension of what they mean must stop at very general notions; and our belief in them rest in the deference to which they are entitled, as Scripture declarations. Of this kind are many, if not all, of those expressions which speak so strongly of the value, and benefit, and efficacy of the death of Christ, of its sacrificial, expiatory, and atoning nature. We may be assured, that these expressions mean something real, refer to something real, though it be something which is to take place in that future dispensation of which we have been speaking. It is reasonable to expect, that, when we come to experience what that state is, the same experience will open to us the distinct propriety of these expressions, their truth, and the substantial truth which they contain; and likewise show us, that however strong and exalted the terms are which we see made use of, they are not stronger nor higher than the subject called for. But for the present we must be, what I own it is difficult to be, content to take up with very general notions, humbly hoping, that a disposition to receive and acquiesce in what appears to us to be revealed, be it more or be it less, will be regarded as the duty which belongs to our subsisting condition, and the measure of information with which it is favoured; and will stand in the place of what, from our deep interest in the matter, we are sometimes tempted to desire, but which, nevertheless, might be unfit for us, a knowledge which not only was, but which we perceived to be, fully adequate to the subject.

There is another class of expressions, which, since they professedly refer to circumstances that are to take place in this new state, and not before, will, it is likely, be rendered quite intelligible by our experience in that state; but must necessarily convey their imperfect information until they be so explained. Of this kind are many of the passages of Scripture which we have already noticed, as referring to the changes which will be wrought in our mortal nature; and the agency of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the intervention of his power in producing those changes, and the nearer similitude which our changed natures and the bodies with which we shall then be clothed, will bear to his. We read, "that he shall change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body." A momentous assurance, no doubt; yet, in its particular signification, waiting to be cleared up by our experience of the event. So likewise are some other particular expressions relating to the same event; such as being "unclothed; clothed upon; the dead in Christ rising first; meeting the Lord in the air; they that are alive not preventing those that are asleep," and the like. These are all most interesting intimations, yet to a certain degree obscure. They answer the purpose of ministering to our hopes, and comfort, and admonition, which they do without conveying any clear ideas; and this, and not the satisfaction of our curiosity, may be the grand purpose for the sake of which intimations of these things were given at all. But then, in so far as they describe a change in the order of nature, of which change we are to be the objects, it seems to follow, that we shall be furnished with experience which will discover to us the full sense of this language. The same remark may be repeated concerning the first and second death, which are expressly spoken of in the Revelations, and as I think alluded to and supposed in other passages of Scripture in which they are not named.

The lesson, inculcated by the observation here pointed out, is this, that, in the difficulties which we meet with in interpreting Scripture, instead of being too uneasy under them, by reason of the obscurity of certain passages, or the degree of darkness which hangs over certain subjects, we ought first to take to ourselves this safe and consoling rule, namely, to make up for the deficiency of our knowledge by the sincerity of our practice; in other words, to act up to what we do know, or, at least, earnestly strive so to do. So far as a man holds fast to this rule, he has a strong ground of comfort under every degree of ignorance, or even of error. And it is a rule applicable to the rich and to the poor, to the educated and to the uneducated, to every state and station of life, and to all the differences which arise from different opportunities of acquiring knowledge. Different obligations may result from different means of obtaining information; but this rule comprises all differences.

The next reflection is, that in meeting with difficulties, nay, very great difficulties, we meet with nothing strange, nothing but what in truth might reasonably have been expected beforehand. It was to be expected, that a revelation, which was to have its completion in another state of existence, would contain many expressions which referred to that state; and which, on account of such reference, would be made clear and perfectly intelligible only to those who had experience of

that state, and to us after we had attained to that experience; whilst, however, in the mean time, they may convey to us enough of information, to admonish us in our conduct, to support our hope, and to incite our endeavours. Therefore the meeting with difficulties, owing to this cause, ought not to surprise us, nor to trouble us over much. Seriousness, nay, even anxiety, touching every thing which concerns our salvation, no thoughtful man can help; but it is possible we may be distressed by doubts and difficulties more than there is any occasion to be distressed.

Lastly, under all our perplexities, under all the misgivings of mind, to which even good men (such is the infirmity of human nature) are subject, there is this important assurance to resort to, that we have a protection over our heads, which is constant and abiding; that God, blessed be his name, is for evermore; that Jesus Christ our Lord is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; that, like as a traveller by land or sea, go where he will, always sees, when he looks up, the same sun; so in our journey through a varied existence, whether it be in our present state, or in our next state, or in the awful passage from one to the other; in the world in which we live, or in the country which we seek; in the hour of death, no less than in the midst of health, we are in the same upholding hands, under the same sufficient and unfailing support.

SERMON XXIII.

OF SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE IN GENERAL.

IN THREE PARTS.—(PART I.)

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?—1 Cor. iii. 16.

THERE are ways of considering the subject of spiritual influence, as well as a want of considering it, which lay it open to difficulties and to misconceptions. But if the being liable to misapprehension and to misrepresentation be thought an objection to any doctrine, I know of no doctrine which is not liable to the same; nor any which has not, in fact, been loaded at various times with great mistakes.

One difficulty which has struck the minds of some is, that the doctrine of an influencing Spirit, and of the importance of this influence to human salvation, is an *arbitrary* system; making every thing to depend, not upon ourselves, nor upon any exertion of our own, but upon the gift of the Spirit.

It is not for us, we allow, to canvass the gifts of God; because we do not, and it seems impossible that we should, sufficiently understand the motive of the giver. In more ordinary cases, and in cases more level to our comprehension, we seem to acknowledge the difference, between a debt and a gift. A debt is bound, as it were, by known rules of justice: a gift depends upon the motive of the giver, which often can be known only to himself. To judge of the propriety either of granting or withholding that to which there is no claim (which is, in the strictest sense, a favour, which, as such, rests with the donor to bestow as to him seemeth good,) we must have the several motives which presented themselves to the mind of the donor before us. This, with respect to the Divine Being, is impossible. Therefore we allow, that, either in this, or any other matter, to canvass the gifts of God is a presumption not fit to be indulged. We are to receive our portion of them with thankfulness. We are to be thankful, for instance, for the share of health and strength which is given us, without inquiring why others are healthier and stronger than ourselves. This is the right disposition of mind with respect to all the benefactions of God Almighty towards us.

But unsearchable does not mean arbitrary. Our necessary ignorance of the motives which rest and dwell in the Divine mind in the bestowing of his grace, is no proof that it is not bestowed by the justest reason. And with regard to the case at present before us, *viz.* the gifts and graces of the Spirit, the charge against it, of its being an arbitrary system, or, in other words, independent of our own endeavours, is not founded in any doctrine or declaration of Scripture. It is not arbitrary in its origin, in its degree, or in its final success.

First; It is not arbitrary in its origin; for you read that it is given to prayer. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it?" But whether we will ask it or not, depends upon ourselves. It is proposed, you find, as a subject for our prayers; for prayer, not formal, cold, heartless, transitory, but prayer from the soul, prayer earnest and persevering; for this last alone is what the Scripture means by prayer. In this, therefore, it cannot be said to be arbitrary, or independent of our endeavours. On the contrary, the Scripture exhorts us to a striving in prayer for this best of all gifts.

But, it will be asked, is not the very first touch of true religion upon the soul, sometimes at least, itself the action of the Holy Spirit? this, therefore, must be prior to our praying for it. And so it may be, and not yet be arbitrarily given. The religious state of the human soul is exceedingly various. Amongst others, there is a state in which there may be good latent dispositions, suitable faculties for religion, yet no religion. In such a state, the spark alone is wanting. To such a state, the elementary principle of religion may be communicated, though not prayed for. Nor can this be said to be arbitrary. The Spirit of God is given where it is wanted; where, when given, it would produce its effect; but that state of heart and mind, upon which the effect was to be produced, might still be the result of moral qualification, improvement, and voluntary endeavour. It is not, I think, difficult to conceive such a case as this.

Nevertheless it may be more ordinarily true, that the gift of the Spirit is holden out to the struggling, the endeavouring, the approaching Christian. When the penitent prodigal was yet a great way off, his father saw him. This parable was delivered by our Lord expressly to typify God's dealing with such sinners as are touched with a sense of their condition. And this is one circumstance in it to be particularly noticed. God sees the returning mind; sees every step and every advance towards him, "though we be yet a great way off;" yet at a great distance; though much remains to be done, and to be attained, and to be

accomplished. And what he sees, he helps. His aid and influence are assisting to the willing Christian, truly and sincerely willing, though yet in a low and imperfect state of proficiency; nay, though in the outset, as it were, of his religious progress. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart;" Psalm xxxiv. 18. But in all this there is nothing arbitrary.

Nor, secondly, is the operation of the Spirit arbitrary in its degree. It has a rule, and its rule is this: "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." Now, of this rule, which is expressed under some, but under no great difference of phrase, in all the first three Gospels, I have first to observe, that though it carry the appearance of harshness and injustice, it is neither the one nor the other, but is correctly and fundamentally just. The meaning is, that whosoever uses, exercises, and improves the gifts which he has received, shall continue to receive still larger portions of these gifts; nay, he who has already received the largest portion, provided he adequately and proportionably uses his gifts, shall also in future receive the largest portion. More and more will be added to him that has the most; whilst he who neglects the little which he has, shall be deprived even of that. That this is the sound exposition of these texts, is proved from hence, that one of them is used as the application of the parable of the talents, concerning the meaning of which parable there can be no doubt at all; for there, he who had received, and, having received, had duly improved ten talents, was placed over ten cities; and of him the expression in question is used, "whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." On the contrary, he who had received one talent, and had neglected what he had received, had it taken from him; and of him the other part of the expression is used: "whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." But there is a point still remaining, *viz.* whether this Scripture rule be applicable to spiritual gifts. I answer that it is so applied, more especially to spiritual knowledge, and the use which we make thereof. "Take heed how ye hear; unto you that hear shall more be given; for he that hath to him shall be given, and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." So stands the passage in Mark; and substantially the same, that is, with a view to the same application, the passage stands in Matthew and Luke. I consider it, therefore, to be distinctly asserted, that this is the rule with regard to spiritual knowledge. And I think the analogy conclusive with regard to other spiritual gifts. In all which there is nothing arbitrary.

Nor, thirdly, is it arbitrary in its final success. "Grieve not the Spirit of God." Therefore he may be grieved. "And hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace:" Heb. x. 29. Therefore he may be despised. Both these are leading texts upon the subject. And so is the following: "And his grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain:" I Cor. xv. 10. Therefore it might have been in vain. The influence, therefore, of the Spirit, may not prevail, even as the admonitions of a friend, the warnings of a parent, may not prevail, may not be successful, may not be attended to; may be rejected, may be resisted, may be despised, may be lost. So that both in its gift, in its degree, operation, and progress, and, above all, in its final effect, it is connected with our own endeavours; it is not arbitrary. Throughout the whole, it does not supersede, but co-operates with ourselves.

But another objection is advanced, and from an opposite quarter. It is said, that if the influence of the Spirit depend, after all, upon our endeavours, the doctrine is nugatory; it comes to the same thing, as if salvation was put upon ourselves and our own endeavours alone, exclusive of every further consideration, and without referring us to any influence or assistance whatever. I answer, that this is by no means true; that it is not the same thing either in reality, or in opinion, or in the consequences of that opinion.

Assuredly it is not the same thing in reality. Is it the same thing, whether we perform a work by our own strength, or by obtaining the assistance and co-operation of another? Or does it make it the same thing, that this assistance is to be obtained by means which it is in our own choice to use or not. Or because, when the assistance is obtained, we may, or may not, avail ourselves of it; or because we may, by neglecting, lose it? After all, they are two different things, performing a work by ourselves, and performing it by means of help.

Again; It is not the same thing in the opinions, and sentiments, and dispositions which accompany it. A person who knows or believes himself to be beholden to another for the progress and success of an undertaking, though still carried on by his own endeavours, acknowledges his friend and his benefactor; feels his dependency and his obligation; turns to him for help and aid in his difficulties; is humble under the want and need which he finds he has of assistance; and, above all things, is solicitous not to lose the benefit of that assistance. This is a different turn of mind, and a different way of thinking from his, who is sensible of no such want, who relies entirely upon his own strength; who, of course, can hardly avoid being proud of his success, or feeling the confidence, the presumption, the self-commendation, and the pretensions, which, however they might suit with a being who achieves his work by his own powers, by no means, and in no wise suit with a frail constitution, which must ask and obtain the friendly aid and help of a kind and gracious benefactor, before he can proceed in the business set out for him, and which it is of unspeakable consequence to him to execute somehow or other.

It is thus in religion. A sense of spiritual weakness and of spiritual wants, a belief that divine aid and help are to be had, are principles which carry the soul to God; make us think of him, and think of him in earnest; convert, in a word, morality into religion; bring us round to holiness of life, by the road of piety and devotion; render us humble in ourselves and grateful towards God. There are two dispositions which compose the true Christian character; humility as to ourselves, affection and gratitude as to God; and both these are natural fruits and effects of the persuasion we speak of. And what is of the most importance of all, this persuasion will be accompanied with a corresponding fear, lest we should neglect, and, by neglecting, lose this invaluable assistance.

On the one hand, therefore, it is not true, that the doctrine of an influencing Spirit is an arbitrary system, setting aside our own endeavours. Nor, on the other hand, is it true, that the connecting it with our own endeavours, as obtained through them, as assisting them, as co-operating with them, renders the doctrine unimportant, or all one as putting the whole upon our endeavours without any such doctrine. If it be true, in fact, that the feebleness of our nature requires the succouring influence of God's Spirit in carrying on the grand business of salvation; and in every state and stage of its progress, in conversion, in regeneration, in constancy, in perseverance, in sanctification; it is of the utmost importance that this truth be declared, and understood, and confessed, and felt; because the perception and sincere acknowledgment of it will be accompanied by a train of sentiments, by a turn of thought, by a degree and species of devotion, by humility, by prayer, by piety, by a recourse to God in our religious warfare, different from what will, or perhaps can, be found in a mind unacquainted with this doctrine; or in a mind rejecting it, or in a mind unconcerned about these things one way or other.

SERMON XXIV.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT.

(PART II.)

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?—1 Cor. iii. 16.

It is undoubtedly a difficulty in the doctrine of spiritual influence, that we do not so perceive the action of the Spirit, as to distinguish it from the suggestions of our own minds. Many good men acknowledge, that they are not conscious of any such immediate perceptions. They, who lay claim to them, cannot advance, like the apostles, such proofs of their claim as must necessarily satisfy others, or, perhaps, secure themselves from delusion. And this is made a ground of objection to the doctrine itself. Now, I think, the objection proceeds upon an erroneous principle, namely, our expecting more than is promised. The agency and influence of the Divine Spirit are spoken of in Scripture, and are promised; but it is no where promised that its operations shall be always *sensible, viz.* distinguishable at the time from the impulses, dictates, and thoughts of our own minds. I do not take upon me to say that they are never so: I only say that it is not necessary, in the nature of things, that they should be so; nor is it asserted in the Scripture that they are so; nor is it promised that they will be so.

The nature of the thing does not imply or require it: by which I mean, that, according to the constitution of the human mind, as far as we are acquainted with that constitution, a foreign influence or impulse may act upon it without being distinguished in our perception from its natural operations, that is, without being perceived at the time. The case appears to me to be this: The order in which ideas and motives rise up in our minds is utterly unknown to us, consequently it will be unknown when that order is disturbed, or altered, or affected; therefore it may be altered, it may be affected, by the interposition of a foreign influence, without that interposition being perceived.

Again, and in like manner, not only the *order* in which thoughts and motives rise up in our minds is unknown to ourselves, but the causes also are unknown, and are incalculable, upon which the vividness of the ideas, the force and strength, and impression of the motives which enter into our minds, depend. Therefore that vividness may be made more or less, that force may be increased or diminished, and both by the influence of a spiritual agent, without any distinct sensation of such agency being felt at the time. Was the case otherwise; was the order, according to which thoughts and motives rise up in our minds fixed, and being fixed, known; then I do admit the order could not be altered or violated, nor a foreign agent interfere to alter or violate it, without our being immediately sensible of what was passing. As also, if the causes upon which the power and strength of either good or bad motives depend were ascertained, then it would likewise be ascertained when this force was ever increased or diminished by external influence and operation; then it might be true, that external influence could not act upon us without being perceived. But in the ignorance under which we are concerning the thoughts and motives of our minds, when left to themselves, we must, naturally speaking, be, at the time, both ignorant and insensible of the presence of an interfering power; one ignorance will correspond with the other; whilst, nevertheless, the assistance and benefit derived from that power, may, in reality, be exceedingly great.

In this instance, philosophy, in my opinion, comes in aid of religion. In the ordinary state of the mind, both the presence and the power of the motives which act upon it, proceed from causes of which we know nothing. This philosophy confesses, and indeed teaches. From whence it follows, that when these causes are interrupted or influenced, that interruption and that influence will be equally unknown to us. Just reasoning shows this proposition to be a consequence of the former. From whence it follows again, that immediately and at the time perceiving the operation of the Holy Spirit is not only not necessary to the reality of these operations, but that it is not consonant to the frame of the human mind that it should be so. I repeat again, that we take not upon us to assert that it is never so. Undoubtedly God can, if he please, give that tact and quality to his communications, that they shall be perceived to be divine communications at the time. And this probably was very frequently the case with the prophets, with the apostles, and with inspired men of old. But it is not the case naturally; by which I mean, that it is not the case according to the constitution of the human soul. It does not appear by experience to be the case usually. What would be the effect of the influence of the Divine Spirit being always or generally accompanied with a distinct notice, it is difficult even to conjecture. One thing may be said of it, that it would be putting us under a quite different dispensation. It would be putting us under a miraculous dispensation; for the agency of the Spirit in our souls distinctly perceived is, properly speak-

ing, a miracle. Now miracles are instruments in the hand of God of signal and extraordinary effects, produced upon signal and extraordinary occasions. Neither internally nor externally do they form the ordinary course of his proceeding with his reasonable creatures.

And in this there is a close analogy with the course of nature, as carried on under the divine government. We have every reason which Scripture can give us, for believing that God frequently interposes to turn and guide the order of events in the world, so as to make them execute his purpose: yet we do not so perceive these interpositions, as, either always or generally, to distinguish them from the natural progress of things. His providence is real, but unseen. We distinguish not between the acts of God and the course of nature. It is so with the Spirit. When, therefore, we teach that good men may be led, or bad men converted, by the Spirit of God, and yet they themselves not distinguish his holy influence; we teach no more than is conformable, as, I think, has been shown, to the frame of the human mind, or rather to our degree of acquaintance with that frame; and also analogous to the exercise of divine power in other things; and also necessary to be so; unless it should have pleased God to put us under a quite different dispensation, that is, under a dispensation of constant miracles.

I do not apprehend that the doctrine of spiritual influence carries the agency of the Deity much farther than the doctrine of providence carries it; or, however, than the doctrine of prayer carries it. For all prayer supposes the Deity to be intimate with our minds.

But if we do not know the influence of the Spirit by a distinguishing perception at the time, by what means do we know any thing of it at all? I answer by its *effects*, and by those alone. And this I conceive to be that which our Saviour said to Nicodemus. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit:" that is, thou perceivest an effect, but the cause which produces that effect operates in its own way, without thy knowing its rule or manner of operation. With regard to the cause, "thou canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth." A change or improvement in thy religious state is necessary. The agency and help of the Spirit in working that change or promoting that improvement, are likewise necessary.

"Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But according to what particular manner, or according to what rule the Spirit acts, is as unknown to us as the causes are which regulate the blowing of the wind, the most incalculable and unknown thing in the world. Its origin is unknown; its mode is unknown; but still it is known in its effects: and so it is with the Spirit. If the change have taken place; if the improvement be produced and be proceeding; if our religious affairs go on well, then have we ground for trust, that the enabling, assisting Spirit of God is with us; though we have no other knowledge or perception of the matter than what this affords.

Perhaps there is no subject whatever, in which we ought to be so careful not to go before our guide as in this of spiritual influence. We ought neither to expect more than what is promised, nor to take upon ourselves to determine what the Scriptures have not determined. This safe rule will produce both caution in judging of ourselves, and moderation in judging, or rather a backwardness in taking upon us to judge of others. The modes of operation of God's Spirit are probably extremely various and numerous. This variety is intimated by our Saviour's comparing it with the blowing of the wind. We have no right to limit it to any particular mode, forasmuch as the Scriptures have not limited it; nor does observation enable us to do it with any degree of certainty.

The conversion of a sinner, for instance, may be sudden; nay, may be instantaneous, yet be both sincere and permanent. We have no authority whatever to deny the possibility of this. On the contrary, we ought to rejoice when we observe in any one even the appearance of such a change. And this change may not only by possibility be sudden, but sudden changes may be more frequent than our observations would lead us to expect. For we can observe only effects, and these must have time to show themselves in; while the change of heart may be already wrought. It is a change of heart which is attributable to the Spirit of God, and this may be sudden. The fruits, the corresponding effects, internal reformation and external good actions, will follow in due time. "I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh."—(Ezek. xi. 19.) These words may well describe God's dealings with his moral creatures, and the operations of his grace. Then follows a description of the effects of these dealings, of these operations, of that grace, *viz.* that they may walk in my statutes, and keep my ordinances and do them;" which represents a permanent habit and course of life (a thing of continuance,) resulting from an inward change, (which might be a thing produced at once.)

In the mean time it may be true, that the more ordinary course of God's grace is gradual and successive; helping from time to time our endeavours, succouring our infirmities, strengthening our resolutions; "making with the temptation a way to escape;" promoting our improvement, assisting our progress; warning, rebuking, encouraging, comforting, attending us, as it were, through the different stages of our laborious advance in the road of salvation.

And as the operations of the Spirit are indefinite, so far as we know, in respect of time, so are they likewise in respect of mode. They may act, and observation affords reason to believe that they do sometimes act, by adding force and efficacy to instruction, advice, or admonition. A passage of Scripture sometimes strikes the heart with wonderful power; adheres, as it were, and cleaves to the memory, till it has wrought its work. An impressive sermon is often known to sink very deep. It is not, perhaps, too much to hope, that the Spirit of God should accompany his ordinances, provided a person bring to them seriousness, humility, and devotion. For example, the devout receiving of the holy sacrament may draw down upon us the gift and benefit of divine grace, or increase our measure of it. This, as being the most solemn act of our religion, and also an appointment of the religion itself, may be properly placed first; but every species of prayer, provided it be earnest; every act of worship, provided it be sincere, may participate in the same effect; may

be to us the occasion, the time, and the instrument of this greatest of all gifts.

In all these instances, and in all indeed that relate to the operations of the Spirit, we are to judge, if we will take upon us to judge at all, (which I do not see that we are obliged to do,) not only with great candour and moderation, but also with great reserve and caution; and as to the modes of Divine grace, or of its proceedings in the hearts of men, as of things undetermined in Scripture, and undeterminable by us. In our own case, which it is of infinitely more importance to each of us to manage rightly, than it is to judge even truly of other men's, we are to use perseveringly, every appointed, every reasonable, every probable, every virtuous endeavour to render ourselves objects of that merciful assistance, which undoubtedly and confessedly we much want, and which, in one way or other, God, we are assured, is willing to afford.

SERMON XXV.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT.

(PART III.)

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God; and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?—1 Cor. iii. 16.

As all doctrine ought to end in practice, and all sound instruction lead to right conduct, it comes, in the last place, to be considered, what obligations follow from the tenet of an assisting grace and spiritual influence; what is to be done on our part in consequence of holding such a persuasion; what is the behaviour corresponding and consistent with such an opinion. For we must always bear in mind, that the Grace and Spirit of God no more take away our freedom of action, our personal and moral liberty, than the advice, the admonitions, the suggestions, the reproofs, the expostulations, the counsels of a friend or parent would take them away. We may act either right or wrong, notwithstanding these interferences. It still depends upon ourselves which of the two we will do. We are not machines under these impressions; nor are we under the impression of the Holy Spirit. Therefore there is a class of duties relating to this subject, as much as any other; and more, perhaps, than any other important.

And, first, I would apply myself to an objection, which belongs to this, namely, the practical part of the subject; which objection is, that the doctrine of spiritual influence, and the preaching of this doctrine, causes men to attend chiefly to the feelings within them, to place religion in feelings and sensations, and to be content with such feelings and sensations, without coming to active duties and real usefulness: that it tends to produce a contemplative religion, accompanied with a sort of abstraction from the interests of this world, as respecting either ourselves or others; a sort of quietism and indifference which contributes nothing to the good of mankind, or to make a man serviceable in his generation; that men of this description sit brooding over what passes in their hearts, without performing any good actions, or well discharging their social or domestic obligations, or indeed guarding their outward conduct with sufficient care.

Now, if there be any foundation in fact for this charge, it arises from some persons holding this doctrine defectively; I mean from their not attending to one main point in the doctrine, which is, that the promise is not to those who have the Spirit, but to those who are *led* by the Spirit; not to those who are favoured with its suggestions, but to those who give themselves up to *follow*, and do actually *follow* these suggestions. Now, though a person, by attending to his feelings and consciousnesses may persuade himself that he has the Spirit of God; yet if he stop and rest in these sensations without consequential practical exertions, it can by no possibility be said of him, nor, one would think, could he possibly bring himself to believe, that he is *led* by the Spirit, that he *follows* the Spirit; for these terms necessarily imply something *done* under that influence, necessarily carry the thoughts to a course of conduct entered into and pursued in obedience to, and by virtue of, that influence. Whether the objection here noticed has any foundation in the conduct of those who hold the doctrine of which we treat, I am uncertain; accounts are different: but at any rate the objection lies not against the doctrine, but against a defective apprehension of it. For, in confirmation of all which we have said, we may produce the example of St. Paul. No one carried the doctrine of spiritual influence higher than he did, or spoke of it so much; yet no character in the world could be farther than his was from resting in feelings and sensations. On the contrary, it was all activity and usefulness. His whole history confirms what he said of himself, that "in labours," in positive exertions, both of mind and body, he was "above measure." It will be said, perhaps, that these exertions were in a particular way, *viz.* in making converts to his opinions; but it was the way in which, as he believed, he was promoting the interest of his fellow-creatures in the greatest degree possible for him to promote it; and it was the way also which he believed to be enjoined upon him by the express and particular command of God. Had there been any other method, any other course and line of beneficent endeavours, in which he thought he could have been more useful, and had the choice been left to himself, (which it was not,) the same principle, the same eager desire of doing good, would have manifested itself with equal vigour in that other line. His sentiments and precepts corresponded with his example: "Do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of Christ." Here *doing* is enjoined. Nothing less than doing can satisfy this precept. Feelings and sensations will not, though of the best kind. "Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth." This is carrying active beneficence as far as it can go. Men are commanded to relieve the necessities of their poor brethren out of the earnings of their manual labour, nay, to labour for that very purpose; and their doing so is stated as the best expiation for former dishonesties, and the best proof how much and how truly they are changed from what they were. "Let him that ruleth, do it with diligence." This is a precept which cannot be complied with without activity. These instructions could not come from a man who placed religion in feelings and sensations.

Having noticed this objection (for it well de-

served notice,) I proceed to state the particular duties which relate to the doctrine of spiritual assistance. And the first of these duties is to *pray for it*. It is by prayer that it is to be sought; by prayer that it is to be obtained. This the Scriptures expressly teach. "How much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" The foundation of prayer, in all cases, is a sense of want. No man prays in earnest or to any purpose for what he does not feel that he wants. Know then and feel the weakness of your nature. Know the infinite importance of holding on, nevertheless, in a course of virtue. Know these two points thoroughly, and you can stand in need of no additional motive (indeed none can be added,) to excite in you strong unwearied supplications for Divine help; not a cold asking for it in any prescribed form of prayer, but cryings and supplications for it, strong and unwearied. The description in the Epistle to the Hebrews, of our Lord's own devotion, may serve to describe the devotion of a Christian, praying, as he ought, for the Spirit; that is, praying from a deep understanding of his own condition, a conviction of his wants and necessities. "He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death; and was heard in that he feared." This is devotion in reality.

There are occasions also, which ought to call forth these prayers with extraordinary and peculiar force.

Is it superstition? is it not, on the contrary, a just and reasonable piety to implore of God the guidance of his Holy Spirit, when we have any thing of great importance to decide upon, or to undertake; especially any thing by which the happiness of others, as well as our own, is likely to be affected?

It would be difficult to enumerate the passages and occasions of a man's life, in which he is particularly bound to apply to God for the aid and direction of his Spirit. In general, in every *turn*, as it may be called, of life; whenever any thing critical, any thing momentous, any thing which is to fix our situation and course of life; most especially any thing which is likely to have an influence upon our moral conduct and disposition, and thereby affect our condition, as candidates for heaven, and as the religious servants of God, is to be resolved upon; *there* and *then* ought we to say our prayers; most ardently supplicating from our Creator and Preserver the grace and guidance of his Holy Spirit.

Is it not, again, a time for calling earnestly for the Spirit of God, and for a greater measure of that Spirit, if he be pleased to grant it to us, when we are recovering from some sin into which we have been betrayed? This case is always critical. The question now is, whether we shall fall into a settled course of sinning, or whether we shall be restored to our former, and to better than our former endeavours to maintain the line of duty. That, under the sting and present alarm of our conscience, we have formed resolutions of virtue for the future is supposed; but whether these resolutions will stand, is the point now at issue. And in this peril of our souls we cannot be too earnest or importunate in our supplications for Divine succour. It can never come to our aid at a time when we more want it. Our fall proves our weakness. Our desire of recovery proves, that, though fallen, we may not be lost. This is a condition which flies to aid and help, if aid and help can be had; and it is a condition to which the promised support of the Spirit most peculiarly applies. On such an occasion, therefore, it will be sought with struggles and strong contention of mind, if we be serious in these matters. So sought, it will be obtained.

Again: Is it not always a fit subject of prayer, that the Holy Spirit would inform, animate, warm, and support our *devotion?* St. Paul speaks of the co-operation of the Spirit with us in this very article. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for *we* know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." The specific help here described is to supply our ignorance. But the words speak also generally of helping our infirmities; meaning, as the passage leads us to suppose, the infirmities which attend our devotion. Now these infirmities are not only ignorance, but coldness, wanderings, absence; for all which a remedy is to be sought in the aid and help of the Spirit.

Next in order of time, to praying for the Spirit of God, but still superior to it in importance, is *listening* and *yielding ourselves* to his suggestions. This is the thing in which we fail.

Now, it being confessed that we cannot ordinarily distinguish at the time the suggestions of the Spirit from the operations of our minds, it may be asked, how are we to listen to them? The answer is, by attending *universally* to the admonitions within us. Men do not listen to their consciences. It is through the whisperings of conscience that the Spirit speaks. If men then are wilfully deaf to their consciences, they cannot hear the Spirit. If hearing, if being compelled to hear, the remonstrances of conscience, they nevertheless decide, and resolve, and determine to go against them; then they grieve, then they defy, then they do despite to the Spirit of God. In both cases, that is, both of neglecting to consult, and of defying, when they cannot help feeling the admonitions which rise up within them, they have this judgment hanging over their heads: "He that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." He that misuses or abuses the portion and measure of spiritual assistance which is afforded him, shall lose even that.

The efficacy of the Spirit is to be judged of by its fruits. Its immediate effects are upon the disposition. A visible outward conduct will ensue; but the true seat of grace and of spiritual energy is in the heart and inward disposition. Whenever, therefore, we find religious carelessness succeeded within us by religious seriousness; conscience, which was silent or unheard, now powerfully speaking and obeyed; sensuality and selfishness, the two grand enemies of salvation, the two great powers of darkness which rule the natural man—when we find even these giving way to the inward accusing voice of conscience; when we find the thoughts of the mind drawing or drawn more and more towards heavenly things; the value and interest of these expectations plainer to our view, a great deal more frequent than heretofore in our meditations, and more fully discerned; the care and safety of our souls rising gradually above concerns and anxieties about worldly affairs; when we find the force of temptation and of evil propensities not extinct, but retreating be-

fore a sense of duty; self-government maintained; the interruptions of it immediately perceived, bitterly deplored, and soon recovered; sin rejected and repelled; and this not so much with an increase of confidence in our strength, as of reliance upon the assisting grace of God; when we find ourselves touched with the love of our Maker, taking satisfaction in his worship and service; when we feel a growing taste and relish for religious subjects and religious exercises; above all, when we begin to rejoice in the comfort of the Holy Ghost; in the prospect of reaching heaven; in the powerful aids and helps which are given us in accomplishing this great end, and the strength, and firmness, and resolution, which, so helped and aided, we experience in our progress: when we feel these things, then may we, without either enthusiasm or superstition, humbly believe that the Spirit of God hath been at work within us. External virtues, good actions will follow, as occasions may draw them forth; but it is *within* that we must look for the change which the inspiration of God's Spirit produces.

With respect to positive external good actions, we have said that they must depend in some measure upon occasions, and abilities, and opportunities, and that they must wait for opportunities; but, observe, it is not so with the breaking off of our sins, be they what they will. That work must wait for nothing. Until that be effected, no change is made. No man, going on in a known sin, has any right to say, that the Spirit of God has done its office within him. Either it has not been given to him, or being given, it has been resisted, despised, or, at least, neglected. Such a person has either yet to obtain it by prayer, or, when obtained, to avail himself duly of its assistance. Let him understand this to be his condition.

The next duty, or rather disposition, which flows from the doctrine of spiritual influence, is *humility*. There never was a truer saying than that pride is the adversary of religion, lowliness and humility the tempers for it. Now religious humility consists in the habit of referring every thing to God. From one end of the New Testament to the other, God is set forth and magnified in his agency and his operations. In the greatest of all businesses, the business of salvation, he is operating, and we co-operating with him. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;" and why? "for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do, according to his good pleasure." He is not superseding our endeavours, (the very contrary is implied by commanding us to exert them,) but still nothing is done without him. If we have moral strength, we are strong in the inward might of the Holy Ghost: consequently all boasting, all vanity, all self-sufficiency, all despising of others, on the score of moral and religious inferiority, are excluded. Without the grace of God, we might have been as the worst of them. There is in the nature of things, one train of sentiment belonging to him who has achieved a work by his own might, and power, and prowess; and another to him, who has been fain to beg for succour and assistance, and by that assistance alone has been carried through difficulties which were too great for his own strength and faculties. This last is the true sentiment for us. It is not for a man, whose life has been saved in a shipwreck by the compassionate help of others; it is not for a man, so saved, to boast of his own alertness and vigour; though it be true, that unless he had exerted what power and strength he was possessed of, he would not have been saved at all.

Lastly: This doctrine shuts the door against a most general, a most specious, and a most deceiving excuse for our sins; which excuse is, that we have striven against them, but are overpowered by our evil nature, by that nature which the Scriptures themselves represent as evil; in a word, that we have done what we could. Now, until by supplication and prayer we have called for the promised assistance of God's Spirit, and with an earnestness, devotion, perseverance, and importunity, proportioned to the magnitude of the concern; until we have rendered ourselves objects of that influence, and yielded ourselves to it, it is not true, "that we have done all that we can." We must not rely upon that excuse; for it is not true in fact. If, experiencing the depravity and imbecility of our nature, we see in this corruption and weakness an excuse for our sins, and taking up with this excuse, we surrender ourselves to them; if we give up, or relax in our opposition to them, and struggles against them, at last consenting to our sins, and falling down with the stream which we have found so hard to resist; if things take this turn with us, then are we in a state to be utterly, finally, and fatally undone. We have it in our power to shut our eyes against the danger; we naturally shall endeavour to make ourselves as easy and contented in our situation as we can; but the truth, nevertheless, is, that we are hastening to certain perdition. If, on the contrary, perceiving the feebleness of our nature, we be driven by the perception, as St. Paul was driven, to fly for deliverance from our sins to the aid, and influence, and power of God's Spirit; to seek for Divine help and succour, as a sinking mariner calls out for help and succour, not formally, we may be sure, or coldly, but with cries, and tears, and supplications, as for life itself; if we be prepared to co-operate with this help, with the holy working of God's grace within us; then may we trust, both that it will be given to us, (yet in such manner as to God shall seem fit, and which cannot be limited by us,) and also that the portion of help which is given, being duly used and improved, (not despised, neglected, put away,) more and more will be continually added for the ultimate accomplishment of our great end and object, the deliverance of our souls from the captivity, and the consequences of sin.

SERMON XXVI.

SIN ENCOUNTERED BY SPIRITUAL AID.

IN THREE PARTS.—(PART I.)

O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?—Rom. vii. 24.

BEFORE we can explain what is the precise subject of this heavy lamentation, and what the precise meaning of the solemn question here asked, we must endeavour to understand what is intended by the expression, "the body of this death," or, as some render it, "this body of death."

Now, let it be remembered, that death, in Saint Paul's epistles, hardly ever signifies a natural death, to which all men of all kinds are equally

subjected; but it means a spiritual death, or that perdition and destruction to which sin brings men in a future state.—"The wages of sin is death;" not the death which we must all undergo in this world, for that is the fate of righteousness as well as sin, but the state, whatever it be, to which sin and sinners will be consigned in the world to come. Not many verses after our text, St. Paul says, "carnal mindedness is death:" "to be earnally minded is death;" leads, that is, inevitably to that future destruction which awaits the sinful indulgence of carnal propensities, and which destruction is, as it were, death to the soul. The book of Revelation, alluding to this distinction, speaks expressly of a *second death*, in terms very fit to be called to mind in the consideration of our present text. "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written, according to their works: and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell (which last word denotes here simply the place of the dead, not the place of punishment) delivered up the dead that were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works; and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire;" (that is, natural death, and the receptacle of those who died, were thenceforth superseded.) *This is the second death.* "And whatsoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." This description, which is exceedingly awful, is given in the last three verses of the 20th chapter. In reference to the same event, this book of Revelation had before told us, *viz.* in the 2d chapter and 11th verse, that he who overcometh shall not be hurt of the *second* death; and in like manner in the above quoted 20th chapter, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in this resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Our Lord himself refers to this death in those never to be forgotten words which he uttered, "He that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die eternally." Die he must, but not eternally: die the first death, but not the second. It is undoubtedly, therefore, the second death which Saint Paul meant by the word death, when he wrote down the sentence "the body of this death;" and the second death is the punishment, perdition, and destruction, which the souls of sinners will suffer in a future state. It is well worthy of observation, that this was indeed the only death which those who wrote the New Testament, and probably all sincere Christians of that age, regarded as important, as the subject of their awe, and dread, and solicitude. The first death, the natural and universal disease of the body, they looked to simply as a change; a going out of one room into another; a putting off one kind of clothing, and putting on a different kind. They esteemed it, compared with the other, of little moment or account. In this respect, there is a wide difference between the Scripture apprehension of the subject and ours. We think entirely of the first death: they thought entirely of the second. We speak and talk of the death which we see: they spoke, and taught, and wrote, of a death which is future to that. We look to the first with terror: they to the second alone. The second alone they represent as formidable. Such is the view which Christianity gives us of these things, so different from what we naturally entertain.

You see then what death is in the Scripture sense; in St. Paul's sense. "The body of this death." The phrase and expression of the text cannot, however, mean this death itself, because he prays to be delivered from it; whereas from that death, or that perdition understood by it, when it once overtakes the sinner, there is no deliverance that we know of. The "body," then, "of this death," is not the death itself, but a state leading to and ending in the second death; namely, in misery and punishment, instead of happiness and rest, after our departure out of this world. And this state it is, from which St. Paul, with such vehemence and concern upon his spirit, seeks to be delivered.

Having seen the signification of the principal phrase employed in the text, the next, and the most important question is, to what condition of the soul, in its moral and religious concerns, the apostle applies it. Now in the verses preceding the text, indeed in the whole of this remarkable chapter, St. Paul has been describing a state of struggle and contention with sinful propensities; which propensities, in the present condition of our nature, we all feel, and which are never wholly abolished. But our apostle goes further: he describes also that state of *unsuccessful* struggle and *unsuccessful* contention, by which many so unhappily fall. His words are these: "That which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not: for the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

This account, though the style and manner of expression in which it is delivered be very peculiar, is, in its substance, no other than what is strictly applicable to the case of thousands. "The good that I would, I do not; the evil which I would not, that I do." How many, who read this discourse, may say the same of themselves! as also, "what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do." This then is the case which St. Paul had in view. It is a case, first, which supposes an informed and enlightened conscience: "I delight in the law of God." "I had not known sin but by the law." "I consent unto the law that it is good." These sentiments could only be uttered by a man who was in a considerable degree at least, acquainted with his duty, and who also approved of the rule of duty which he found laid down.

Secondly: The case before us also supposes an inclination of mind and judgment to perform our duty. "When I *would* do good, evil is present with me: to *will* is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not."

Thirdly: It supposes this inclination of mind and judgment to be continually overpowered. "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members;" that is, the evil principle not only opposes the judgment of the mind, and the conduct which that judgment dictates, (which may be the case

with all,) but in the present case subdues and gets the better of it: "Not only wars against the law of my mind, but brings me into captivity."

Fourthly: The case supposes a sense and thorough consciousness of all this: of the rule of duty; of the nature of sin; of the struggle; of the defeat. It is a prisoner sensible of his chains. It is a soul tied and bound by the fetters of its sins, and knowing itself to be so. It is by no means the case of the ignorant sinner; it is not the case of an erring mistaken conscience; it is not the case of a seared and hardened conscience. None of these could make the reflection or the complaint which is here described. "The commandment which was ordained unto life, *I* found to be unto death. I am carnal, sold under sin. In me dwelleth no good thing. The law is holy; and the commandment holy, just, and good; but sin, that it might appear sin, (that it might be more conspicuous, aggravated, and inexcusable,) works death in me by that which is good." This language by no means belongs to the stupified insensible sinner.

Nor, fifthly, as it cannot belong to an original insensibility of conscience, that is, an insensibility of which the person himself does not remember the beginning, so neither can it belong to the sinner who has got over the rebukes, distrusts, and uneasiness which sin once occasioned. True it is, that this uneasiness *may* be got over almost entirely; so that whilst the danger remains the same, whilst the final event will be the same, whilst the coming destruction is not less sure or dreadful, the uneasiness and the apprehension are gone. This is a case too common, too deplorable, too desperate; but it is not the case of which we are now treating, or of which St. Paul treated. Here we are presented throughout with complaint and uneasiness; with a soul exceedingly dissatisfied, exceedingly indeed disquicted, and disturbed, and alarmed, with the view of its condition.

Upon the whole, St. Paul's account is the account of a man in some sort struggling with his vices; at least deeply conscious of what they are, whither they are leading him, where they will end; acknowledging the law of God, not only in words and speeches, but in his mind; acknowledging its excellency, its authority; wishing also, and willing to act up to it, but, in fact, doing no such thing; feeling in practice a lamentable inability of doing his duty, yet perceiving that it must be done. All he has hitherto attained is a state of successive resolutions and relapses. Much is willed, nothing is effected. No furtherance, no advance, no progress, is made in the way of salvation. He feels indeed his double nature; but he finds that the law in his members, the law of the flesh, brings the whole man into captivity. He may have some better strivings, but they are unsuccessful. The result is, that he obeys the law of sin.

This is the picture which our apostle contemplated, and he saw in it nothing but misery: "O wretched man that I am!" Another might have seen it in a more comfortable light. He might have hoped that the will would be taken for the deed; that since he felt in his mind a strong approbation of the law of God; nay, since he felt a delight in contemplating it, and openly professed to do so; since he was neither ignorant of it, nor forgetful of it, nor insensible of its obligation, nor ever set himself to dispute its authority; nay, since he had occasionally likewise endeavoured to bring himself to an obedience to this law, however unsuccessful his endeavours had been; above all, since he had sincerely deplored and bewailed his fallings off from it, he might hope, I say, that his was a case for favourable acceptance.

St. Paul saw it *not* in this light. He saw in it no ground of confidence or satisfaction. It was a state, to which he gives no better name than "the body of death." It was a state not *in* which he hoped to be saved, but *from* which he sought to be delivered. It was a state, in a word, of bitterness and terror; drawing from him expressions of the deepest anguish and distress: "O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

SERMON XXVII.

EVIL PROPENSITIES ENCOUNTERED BY THE AID OF THE SPIRIT.

(PART II.)

O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?—Rom. vii. 24.

He who has not felt the weakness of his nature, it is probable, has reflected little upon the subject of religion. I should conjecture this to be the case.

But then, when men do feel the weakness of their nature, it is not always that this consciousness carries them into a right course, but sometimes into a course the very contrary of what is right. They may see in it, as hath been observed, and many do see in it, nothing but an excuse and apology for their sins. Since it is acknowledged that we carry about with us a frail, not to call it a depraved, corrupted nature, surely, they say, we shall not be amenable to any severities or extremities of judgment for delinquencies to which such a nature must ever be liable; or, which is indeed all the difference there is between one man and another, for greater degrees or less, for more or fewer of these delinquencies. The natural man takes courage from this consideration. He finds ease in it. It is an opiate to his fears. It lulls him into a forgetfulness of danger, and of the dreadful end, if the danger be real. Then the practical consequence is, that he begins to relax even of those endeavours to obey God which he has hitherto exerted. Imperfect and inconstant as these endeavours were at best, they become gradually more languid and more unfrequent, and more insincere than they were before: his sins increase upon him in the same proportion: he proceeds rapidly to the condition of a confirmed sinner, either secret or open; it makes no difference as to his salvation. And this descent into the depths of moral vileness and depravity began, in some measure, with perceiving and confessing the weakness of his nature; and giving to this perception that most erroneous, that most fatal turn, the regarding it as an excuse for every thing; and as dispensing even with the self-denials, and with the exertions of self-government, which a man had formerly thought it necessary to exercise, and in some sort, though in no sufficient sort, had exercised.

Now, I ask, was this *St. Paul's* way of considering the subject? Was this the turn which *he* gave to it? Altogether the contrary. It was impossible for any Christian of any age, to be more deeply impressed with a sense of the weakness of human nature than he was; or to express it more strongly than he has done in the chapter before us. But, observe; feeling most sensibly, and painting most forcibly, the sad condition of his nature, he never alleges it as an excuse for sin: he does not console himself with any such excuse. He does not make it a reason for setting himself at rest upon the subject. He finds no relief to his fears in any such consideration. It is not with him a ground for expecting salvation: on the contrary, he sees it to be a state not leading to salvation; otherwise, why did he seek so earnestly to be delivered from it?

And how to be delivered? that becomes the next question. In order to arrive at St. Paul's meaning in this matter, we must attend with some degree of care, not only to the text, but to the words which follow it. The 24th verse contains the question, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and then the 25th verse goes on, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now there is good reason to believe, that this 25th verse does not appear in our copies as it ought to be read. It is most probable that the passage stood thus: the 24th verse asks, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then the 25th verse answers, "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Instead of the words "I thank God," put the words "The grace of God," and you will find the sense cleared up by the change very much. I say, it is highly probable that this change exhibits what St. Paul really wrote. In English there is no resemblance either in sound or writing between the two sentences, "I thank God," and "The grace of God;" but in the language in which the epistle was written there is a very great resemblance. And, as I have said, there is reason to believe that in the transcribing one has been confounded with the other. Perhaps the substantial meaning may be the same whichever way you read the passage: but what is implied only in one way, is clearly expressed in the other way.

The question, then, which St. Paul so earnestly and devoutly asks is, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" from the state of soul which I feel, and which can only lead to final perdition? And the answer to the question is, "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Can a more weighty question be asked? Can an answer be given which better deserves to be thoroughly considered?

The question is, "Who shall deliver us?" The answer: "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The "grace of God" means the favour of God: at present, therefore, the answer stands in general terms. We are only informed, that we are rescued from this state of moral difficulty, of deep religious distress, by the favour of God, through Jesus Christ. It remains to be gathered from what follows, in what particularly this grace or favour consists. St. Paul having asked the question, and given the answer in general terms, proceeds to enlarge upon the answer in these words:—"There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." There is now no condemnation: but of whom, and to whom, is this spoken? It is to them who first are in Christ Jesus; who, secondly, walk not after the flesh; who, thirdly, walk after the Spirit.

And whence arises this alteration and improvement in our condition and our hopes; this exemption, or rather deliverance, from the ordinary state of man? St. Paul refers us to the cause. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Which words can hardly bear any other signification than this, *viz.* "That the aid and operation of God's Spirit, given through Jesus Christ, hath subdued the power which sin had obtained, and once exercised over me." With this interpretation the whole sequel of St. Paul's reasoning agrees. Every sentence almost that follows illustrates the interpretation, and proves it to be the true one. With what, but with the operation and the co-operation of the Spirit of God, as of a real, efficient, powerful, active Being, can such expressions as the following be made to suit?—"If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."—"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—"If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you."—"By his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—"Ye have received the Spirit of adoption."—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit." All which expressions are found in the eighth chapter, namely, the chapter following the text, and all, indeed, within the compass of a few verses. These passages either assert or assume the fact, namely, the existence and agency of such a Spirit; its agency, I mean, in and upon the human soul. It is by the aid, therefore, of this Spirit, that the deliverance so earnestly sought for is effected; a deliverance represented as absolutely necessary to be effected in some way or other. And it is also represented as one of the grand benefits of the Christian dispensation. "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Which passage I expound thus: A mere law, that is, a rule merely telling us what we ought to do, without enabling us, or affording us any help or aid in doing it, is not calculated for such a nature as ours; "it is weak through the flesh;" it is ineffectual by reason of our natural infirmities. Then what the law, or a mere rule of rectitude, (for that is what any law, as such is,) could not do, was done under the Christian dispensation; and how done? The righteousness of the law, that is, the righteousness which the law dictated, and which it aimed, as far as it could, to procure and produce, is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; is actually produced and procured in us, who live under the influence and direction of the Holy Spirit. By this Holy Spirit we have that assistance which the law could not impart, and without which, as a mere rule, though ever so good and right a rule, it was weak and insufficient, forasmuch as it had not force or strength sufficient to produce obedience in those who acknowledged its authority.

To communicate this so much wanted assistance, was one end and effect of Christ's coming. So it is intimated by St. Paul, "What the law

could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did; that is, God "sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin," namely, sending him by reason or on account of sin, "condemned sin in the flesh;" vouchsafed, that is, spiritual aid and ability, by which aid and ability sin and the power of sin might be effectually opposed, encountered, and repelled.

SERMON XXVIII.

THE AID OF THE SPIRIT TO BE SOUGHT AND PRESERVED BY PRAYER.

(PART III.)

O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?—Rom. vii. 24.

If it be doctrinally true, that man in his ordinary state, in that state at least in which great numbers find themselves, is in a deplorable condition, a condition which ought to be a subject to him of great and bitter lamentation, *viz.* that his moral powers are ineffectual for his duty; able, perhaps, on most occasions, to perceive and approve of the rule of right; able, perhaps, to will it; able, perhaps, to set on foot unsuccessful, frustrated, and defeated endeavours after that will, but by no means able to pursue or execute it:—if it be also true, that strength and assistance may and can be communicated to this feeble nature, and that it is by the action of the Holy Spirit upon the soul, that it is so communicated; that with this aid and assistance sin may be successfully encountered, and such a course of duty maintained as may render us accepted in Christ; and further, that to impart the above described assistance is one of the ends of Christ's coming, and one of the operations of his love towards mankind:—if, I say, these propositions be doctrinally true, then follow from them these three practical rules: first, That we are to pray sincerely, earnestly, and incessantly for this assistance; secondly, That by so doing we are to obtain it; thirdly, That being obtained, we are to yield ourselves to its agency, to be obedient to its dictates.

First: We are to pray sincerely, earnestly, and incessantly, for this assistance. A fundamental, and, as it seems to me, an insurmountable text, upon this head, is our Saviour's declaration, Luke xi. 13,—"If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" This declaration, besides expressing (which was its primary object) God's benignant, prompt, and merciful disposition towards us; which here, as in other places, our Saviour compares with the disposition of a parent towards his children; beside this, the text undoubtedly assumes the fact of there being a Holy Spirit, of its being the gift of God, of its being given to them that ask him; that these things are all realities; a real spiritual assistance, really given, and given to prayer. But let it be well observed, that whensoever the Scripture speaks of prayer, whensoever it uses that term, or other terms, equivalent to it, it means prayer, sincere and earnest; in the full and proper sense of these words, prayer proceeding from the heart and soul. It does not mean any particular form of words whatever; it does not mean any service of the lips, any utterance or pronunciation of prayer, merely as such, but supplication actually and truly proceeding from the heart. Prayer may be solemn without being sincere. Every decency, every propriety, every visible mark and token of prayer may be present, yet the heart not engaged. This is the requisite which must make prayer availing; this is the requisite indeed which must make it that which the Scripture means whenever it speaks of prayer. Every outward act of worship, without this participation of the heart, fails, not because men do not pray sincerely, but because, in Scripture sense, they do not pray at all.

If these qualities of internal seriousness and impression belong to prayer, whenever prayer is mentioned in Scripture, they seem more peculiarly essential in a case, and for a blessing, purely and strictly spiritual. We must pray with the spirit, at least when we pray for spiritual succour.

Furthermore; there is good authority in Scripture, which it would carry us too widely from our subject to state at present, for persevering in prayer, even when long unsuccessful. *Perseverance* in unsuccessful prayer is one of the doctrines and of the lessons of the New Testament.

But again: We must pray for the Spirit earnestly, I mean with a degree of earnestness proportioned to the magnitude of the request. The earnestness with which we pray will always be in proportion to our sense, knowledge, and consciousness of the importance of the thing which we ask. This consciousness is the source and principle of earnestness in prayer; and in this, I fear, we are greatly deficient. We do not possess or feel it in the manner in which we ought; and we are deficient upon the subject of spiritual assistance most particularly. I fear that many understand and reflect little upon the importance of what they are about, upon the exceedingly great consequence of what they are asking, when they pray to God, as we do in our liturgy, "to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit;" "to make clean our hearts within us;" "not to take his Holy Spirit from us;" "to give us increase of grace;" "to grant that his Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts."

These are momentous petitions, little as we may perceive, or think, or account of them at the time. It has been truly said, that we are hardly ever certain of praying aright, except when we pray for the Spirit of God. When we pray for temporal blessings, we do not know, though God does, whether we ask what is really for our good: when we ask for the assistance and sanctification of God's Spirit in the work and warfare of religion, we ask for that which by its very nature is good, and which without our great fault, will be good to us.

But, secondly; We must obtain it. God is propitious. You hear that he has promised it to prayer, to prayer really and truly such; to prayer, *viz.* issuing from the heart and soul; for no other is ever meant. We are suppliants to our Maker for various and continual blessings; for health, for ease, it may be for prosperity and success. There is, as hath already been observed, some degree of uncertainty in all these cases, whether we ask what is fit and proper to be granted, or even what if granted, would do us good. There is this likewise farther to be observed, that they are what, if

such be the pleasure of God, we can do without. But how incapable we are of doing without God's Spirit, of proceeding in our spiritual course upon our own strength and our own resources, of finally accomplishing the work of salvation without it, the strong description which is given by St. Paul may convince us, if our own experience had not convinced us before. Many of us, a large majority of us, either require, or have required, a great change, a moral regeneration. This is to be effectuated by the aid of God's Spirit. Vitiated hearts will not change themselves; not easily, not frequently, not naturally, perhaps, not possibly. Yet, "without holiness no man shall see God." How then are the unholy to become holy? *Holiness* is a thing of the heart and soul. It is not a few forced, constrained actions, though good as actions, which constitute holiness. It must reside within us; it is a disposition of soul. To acquire, therefore, that which is not yet acquired, to change that which is not yet changed, to go to the root of the malady, to cleanse and purify the *inside* of the cup, the foulness of our mind, is a work of the Spirit of God within us. Nay, more: many, as the Scripture most significantly expresses it, are *dead* in sins and trespasses; not only committing sins and trespasses, but dead in them: that is, as insensible of their condition under them, as a dead man is insensible of his condition. Where this is the case, the sinner must, in the first instance, be roused and quickened to a sense of his condition, of his danger, his fate; in a word, he must by some means or other be brought to feel a strong compunction. This is also an office for the Spirit of God. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. ii. 1. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," Eph. v. 14. Whether, therefore, we be amongst the dead in sin, or whether we be of the number of those with whom, according to St. Paul's description, to *will* is present, but how to perform that which is good they find not; who, though they approve the law of God, nay delight in it, after the inward man, that is, in the answers of their conscience, are nevertheless *brought into captivity* to the law of sin which is in their members; carnal, sold under sin; doing what they allow not, what they hate; doing not the good which they would, but the evil which they would not; whichever of these be our wretched estate, for such the apostle pronounces it to be, the grace and influence of God's Spirit must be obtained in order to rescue and deliver us from it; and the sense of this want and of this necessity lies at the root of our devotions, when directed to this object.

To those who are in a better state than what has been here described, little need be said, because the very supposition of their being in a better state includes that earnest and devout application by prayer, for the continual aid, presence, and indwelling of God's Holy Spirit, which we state to be a duty of the Christian religion.

But, thirdly, The assistance of God's Spirit being obtained, we are to yield ourselves to its direction; to consult, attend, and listen to its dictates, suggested to us through the admonitions of our conscience. The terms of Scripture represent the Spirit of God as an assisting, not a forcing power; as not suspending our own powers, but enabling them; as imparting strength and faculty for our religious work, if we will use them; but whether we will use them or not, still depending upon ourselves. Agreeably hereunto St. Paul, you have heard, asserts, that there is no condemnation to them who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. The promise is not to them who have the Spirit, but to them who walk after the Spirit. To walk after the flesh, is to follow wherever the impulses of sensuality and selfishness lead us; which is a voluntary act. To walk after the Spirit, is steadily and resolutely to obey good motions within us, whatever they cost us; which also is a voluntary act. All the language of this remarkable chapter (Rom. vii.) proceeds in the same strain; namely, that after the Spirit of God is given, it remains and rests with ourselves whether we avail ourselves of it or not. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live." It is through the Spirit that we are enabled to mortify the deeds of the flesh. But still, whether we mortify them or not, is our act, because it is made a subject of precept and exhortation so to do. Health is God's gift, but what use we will make of it is our choice. Bodily strength is God's gift, but of what advantage it shall be to us depends upon ourselves. Even so the higher gift of the Spirit remains a gift, the value of which will be exceedingly great, will be little, will be none, will be even an increase of guilt and condemnation, according as it is applied and obeyed, or neglected and withstood. The fourth chapter of Ephesians, verse 30, is a warning voice upon this subject: "Grieve not the Spirit of God;" therefore he may be grieved: being given, he may be rejected; rejected, he may be withdrawn.

St. Paul, Rom. viii., represents the gift and possession of the Spirit in these words: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you:" and its efficacy, where it is efficacious, in the following magnificent terms: "If the Spirit of him that raised Christ from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." What, nevertheless, is the practical inference therefrom stated in the very next words? "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die:" consequently it is still possible, and plainly conceived, and supposed, and stated to be so, even after this communication of the Spirit, to live, notwithstanding, according to the flesh; and still true, that, "if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." "We are debtors;" our obligation, our duty imposed upon us by this gift of the Spirit, is no longer to live after the flesh; but, on the contrary, through the Spirit so given, to do that which, without it, we could not have done, to "mortify the deeds of the body." Thus following the suggestions of the Spirit, ye shall live; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God," as many as yield themselves to its guidance and direction, "they are the sons of God."

To conclude the subject: The difference between those who succeed, and those who fail in their Christian course, between those who obtain, and those who do not obtain salvation, is this: They may both feel equally the weakness of their nature, the existence and the power of evil propensities within them; but the former, by praying with their whole heart and soul, and that perseveringly, for spiritual assistance, obtain it; and, by the aid so obtained, are enabled to withstand,

and do, in fact, withstand, their evil propensities; the latter sink under them. I will not say that all are comprised under this description: for neither are all included in St. Paul's account of the matter, from which our discourse set out; but I think, that it represents the general condition of Christians as to their spiritual state, and that the greatest part of those who read this discourse, will find, that they belong to one side or other of the alternative here stated.

SERMON XXIX.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CANAANITES.

So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded.—Joshua x. 40.

I HAVE known serious and well-disposed Christians much affected with the accounts which are delivered in the Old Testament, of the Jewish wars and dealings with the inhabitants of Canaan. From the Israelites' first setting foot in that country, to their complete establishment in it, which takes up the whole book of Joshua and part of the book of Judges, we read, it must be confessed, of massacres and desolations unlike what are practised now-a-days between nations at war, of cities and districts laid waste, of the inhabitants being totally destroyed, and this, as it is alleged in the history, by the authority and command of Almighty God. Some have been induced to think such accounts incredible, inasmuch as such conduct could never, they say, be authorised by the good and merciful Governor of the universe.

I intend in the following discourse to consider this matter so far as to show that these transactions were calculated for a beneficial purpose, and for the general advantage of mankind, and being so calculated, were not inconsistent either with the justice of God, or with the usual proceedings of divine providence.

Now the first and chief thing to be observed is, that the nations of Canaan were destroyed for their wickedness. In proof of this point, I produce the 18th chapter of Leviticus, the 24th and the following verses. Moses in this chapter, after laying down prohibitions against brutal and abominable vices, proceeds in the 24th verse thus: "Defile not yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you, and the land is defiled; therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: for all these abominations have the men of the land done which were before you, and the land is defiled; that the land vomit not you out also, when ye defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from amongst their people. Therefore shall ye keep my ordinances that ye commit not any of these abominable customs which were committed before you; and that you defile not yourselves therein." Now the facts disclosed in this passage, are, for our present purpose, extremely material and extremely satisfactory. First, The passage testifies the principal point, namely, that the Canaanites were the wicked people we represent them to be; and that this point does not rest upon supposition, but upon proof: in particular, the following words contain an express assertion of the guilt of that people. "In all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you; for all these abominations have the men of the land done." Secondly, The form and turn of expression seems to show that these detestable practices were general among them, and habitual: they are said to be abominable *customs* which were committed. Now the word custom is not applicable to a few single, or extraordinary instances, but to usage and to national character; which argues, that not only the practice, but the sense and notion of morality was corrupted among them, or lost; and it is observable, that these practices, so far from being checked by their religion, formed a part of it. They are described not only under the name of abominations, but of abominations which they have done unto their gods. What a state of national morals must that have been! Thirdly, The passage before us positively and directly asserts, that it was for these sins that the nations of Canaan were destroyed. This, in my judgment, is the important part of the inquiry. And what do the words under consideration declare? "In all these, namely, the odious and brutal vices which had been spoken of, the nations are defiled which I cast out before you; and the land is defiled: *therefore* I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it." This is the reason and cause of the calamities which I bring on it. The land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. The very land is sick of its inhabitants; of their odious and brutal practices; of their corruption and wickedness. This, and no other, was the reason for destroying them: this, and no other, is the reason here alleged. It was not, as hath been imagined, to make way for the Israelites; nor was it simply for their idolatry.

It appears to me extremely probable, that idolatry in those times led, in all countries, to the vices here described; and also that the detestation, threats, and severities, expressed against idolatry in the Old Testament, were not against idolatry simply, or considered as an erroneous religion, but against the abominable crimes which usually accompanied it. I think it quite certain that the case was so in the nations of Canaan. Fourthly, It appears from the passage before us, and what is surely of great consequence to the question, that God's abhorrence and God's treatment of these crimes were impartial, without distinction, and without respect of nations or persons. The words which point out the divine impartiality are those in which Moses warns the Israelites against falling into any of the like wicked courses; "that the land," says he, "cast not you out also, when you defile it, as it cast out the nations that were before you; for whoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them, shall be cut off from among their people." The Jews are sometimes called the chosen and favoured people of God; and, in a certain sense, and for some purposes they were so: yet is this very people, both in this place, and in other places, over and

over again reminded, that if they followed the same practices, they must expect the same fate; "Ye shall not walk in the way of the nations which I cast out before you; for they committed all those things, and therefore I abhorred them: as the nations which the Lord destroyed before your face, so shall ye perish: because ye were not obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God."

What farther proves not only the justice but the clemency of God, his long-suffering, and that it was the incorrigible wickedness of those nations, which at last drew down upon them their destruction, is, that he suspended, as we may so say, the stroke, till their wickedness was come to such a pitch, that they were no longer to be endured. In the 15th chapter of Genesis, God tells Abraham, that his descendants of the fourth generation, should return into that country, and not before; "for the iniquity," saith he, "of the Amorites is not yet full." It should seem from hence, that so long as their crimes were confined within any bounds, they were permitted to remain in their country. We conclude, therefore, and we are well warranted in concluding, that the Canaanites were destroyed on account of their wickedness. And that wickedness was perhaps aggravated by their having had among them Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—examples of a purer religion and a better conduct; still more by the judgments of God so remarkably set before them in the history of Abraham's family; particularly by the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah: At least these things prove that they were not without warning, and that God did not leave himself without witness among them.

Now, when God, for the wickedness of a people, sends an earthquake, or a fire, or a plague among them, there is no complaint of injustice, especially when the calamity is known, or expressly declared beforehand, to be inflicted for the wickedness of such people. It is rather regarded as an act of exemplary penal justice, and, as such, consistent with the character of the moral Governor of the universe. The objection, therefore, is not to the Canaanitish nations being destroyed; (for when their national wickedness is considered, and when that is expressly stated as the cause of their destruction, the dispensation, however severe, will not be questioned;) but the objection is solely to the manner of destroying them. I mean there is nothing but the manner left to be objected to: their wickedness accounts for the thing itself. To which objection it may be replied, that if the thing itself be just, the manner is of little signification; of little signification even to the sufferers themselves: For where is the great difference, even to them, whether they were destroyed by an earthquake, a pestilence, a famine, or by the hands of an enemy? Where is the difference, even to our imperfect apprehensions of divine justice, provided it be, and is known to be, for their wickedness that they are destroyed? But this destruction, you say, confounded the innocent with the guilty. The sword of Joshua and of the Jews spared neither women nor children. Is it not the same with all other national visitations? Would not an earthquake, or a fire, or a plague, or a famine amongst them have done the same? Even in an ordinary and natural death the same thing happens. God takes away the life he lends, without regard, that we can perceive, to age, or sex, or character. But, after all, promiscuous massacres, the burning of cities, the laying waste of countries, are things dreadful to reflect upon. Who doubts it? so are all the judgments of Almighty God. The effect, in whatever way it shows itself, must necessarily be tremendous, when the Lord, as the Psalmist expresses it, "moveth out of his place to punish the wicked." But it ought to satisfy us, at least this is the point upon which we ought to rest and fix our attention—that it was for excessive, wilful, and forewarned wickedness, that all this befel them, and that it is expressly so declared in the history which recites it.

But further: If punishing them by the hands of the Israelites, rather than by a pestilence, an earthquake, a fire, or any such calamity, be still an objection, we may perceive, I think, some reasons for this method of punishment in preference to any other whatever; always, however, bearing in our mind, that the question is not concerning the justice of the punishment, but the mode of it. It is well known that the people of those ages were affected by no proof of the power of the gods which they worshipped so deeply, as by their giving them victory in war. It was by this species of evidence that the superiority of their own gods above the gods of the nations which they conquered was in their opinion evinced. This being the actual persuasion which then prevailed in the world, no matter whether well or ill founded, how were the neighbouring nations, for whose admonition this dreadful example was intended, how were they to be convinced of the supreme power of the God of Israel above the pretended gods of other nations, and of the righteous character of Jehovah, that is of his abhorrence of the vices which prevailed in the land of Canaan? how, I say, were they to be convinced so well, or at all indeed, as by enabling the Israelites, whose God he was known and acknowledged to be, to conquer under his banner, and drive out before them those who resisted the execution of that commission with which the Israelites declared themselves to be invested—the expulsion and extermination of the Canaanitish nations? This convinced surrounding countries, and all who were observers or spectators of what passed; first, That the God of Israel was a real God; secondly, That the gods which other nations worshipped were either no gods, or had no power against the God of Israel; and, thirdly, That it was he, and he alone, who possessed both the power and the will to punish, to destroy, and to exterminate from before his face, both nations and individuals who gave themselves up to the crimes and wickedness for which the Canaanites were notorious. Nothing of this sort would have appeared, or with the same evidence however, from an earthquake, or a plague, or any natural calamity. These might not have been attributed to divine agency at all, or not to the interposition of the God of Israel.

Another reason which made this destruction both more necessary and more general than it would have otherwise been, was the consideration, that if any of the old inhabitants were left, they would prove a snare to those who succeeded them in the country; would draw and seduce them by degrees into the vices and corruptions which prevailed amongst themselves. Vices of all kinds, but vices most particularly of the licentious kind, are astonishingly infectious. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. A small number of persons addicted to them, and allowed to practise them

with impunity or encouragement, will spread them through the whole mass. This reason is formally and expressly assigned, not simply for the punishment, but for the extent to which it was carried, namely, extermination. "Thou shalt *utterly* destroy them, that they teach you not to do after all their abominations which they have done unto their gods."

To conclude: In reading the Old Testament account of the Jewish wars and conquests in Canaan, and the terrible destruction brought upon the inhabitants thereof, we are constantly to bear in our minds, that we are reading the execution of a dreadful but just sentence pronounced by God against the intolerable and incorrigible crimes of these nations—that they were intended to be made an example to the whole world of God's avenging wrath against sins of this magnitude and this kind: sins which, if they had been suffered to continue, might have polluted the whole ancient world, and which could only be checked by the signal and public overthrow of nations notoriously addicted to them, and so addicted as to have incorporated them even into their religion and their public institutions—that the miseries inflicted upon the nations by the invasion of the Jews were expressly declared to be inflicted on account of their abominable sins—that God had borne with them long—that God did not proceed to execute his judgments till their wickedness was full—that the Israelites were mere instruments in the hands of a righteous Providence for the effectuating the extermination of a people of whom it was necessary to make a public example to the rest of mankind: that this extermination, which might have been accomplished by a pestilence, by fire, by earthquakes, was appointed to be done by the hands of the Israelites, as being the clearest and most intelligible method of displaying the power and righteousness of the God of Israel; his power over the pretended gods of other nations, and his righteous hatred of the crimes into which they were fallen.

This is the true statement of the case. It is no forced or invented construction, but the idea of the transaction set forth in Scripture; and it is an idea which, if retained in our thoughts, may fairly, I think, reconcile us to every thing which we read in the Old Testament concerning it.

SERMON XXX.

NEGLECT OF WARNINGS.

Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!—Deut. xxxii. 29.

THERE is one great sin, which nevertheless may not be amongst the number of those of which we are sensible, and of which our consciences accuse us; and that sin is the neglect of warnings.

It is our duty to consider this life throughout as a probationary state, nor do we ever think truly, or act rightly, but so long as we have this consideration fully before our eyes. Now one character of a state, suited to qualify and prepare rational and improveable creatures for a better state, consists in the warnings which it is constantly giving them; and the providence of God, by placing *us* in such a state, becomes the author of these warnings. It is his paternal care which admonishes us by and through the events of life and death that pass before us. Therefore it is a sin against Providence to neglect them. It is hardiness and determination in sin; or it is blindness, which in whole or in part is wilful; or it is giddiness, and levity, and contemptuousness in a subject which admits not of these dispositions towards it without great offence to God.

A serious man hardly ever passes a day, never a week, without meeting with some warning to his conscience; without something to call to his mind his situation with respect to his future life. And these warnings, as perhaps was proper, come the thicker upon us the farther we advance in life. The dropping into the grave of our acquaintance, and friends, and relations; what can be better calculated, not to prove, (for we do not want the point to be proved,) but to possess our hearts with a complete sense and perception of the extreme peril and hourly precariousness of our condition? *viz.* to teach this momentous lesson, that when we preach to you concerning heaven and hell, we are not preaching concerning things at a distance, things remote, things long before they come to pass; but concerning things near, soon to be decided, in a very short time to be fixed one way or other. This is a truth of which we are warned by the course of mortality; yet with this truth confessed, with these warnings before us, we venture upon sin. But it will be said, that the events which ought to warn us are out of our mind at the time. But this is not so. Were it that these things came to pass in the wide world only at large, it might be that we should seldom hear of them or soon forget them. But the events take place where we ourselves are; within our own doors; in our own families; amongst those with whom we have the most constant correspondence, the closest intimacy, the strictest connexion. It is impossible to say that such events can be out of our mind; nor is it the fact. The fact is, that knowing them, we act in defiance of them: which is neglecting warnings in the worst sense possible. It aggravates the daringness, it aggravates the desperateness of sin; but it is so nevertheless. Supposing these warnings to be sent by Providence, or that we believe, and have reason to believe, and ought to believe, that they are so sent, then the aggravation is very great.

We have warnings of every kind. Even youth itself is continually warned that there is no reliance to be placed, either on strength, or constitution, or early age; that if they count upon life as a thing to be reckoned secure for a considerable number of years, they calculate most falsely; and if they act upon this calculation, by allowing themselves in the vices which are incidental to their years, under a notion that it will be long before they shall have to answer for them, and before that time come they shall have abundant season for repenting and amending; if they suffer such arguments to enter into their minds, and act upon them, then are they guilty of neglecting God in his warnings. They not only err in point of just reasoning, but they neglect the warnings which God has expressly set before them. Or if they take upon themselves to consider religion as a thing not made or calculated for them; as much too serious for their years; as made and intended for the old and the dying; at least as what is un-

necessary to be entered upon at present; as what may be postponed to a more suitable time of life: whenever they think thus, they think very presumptuously; they are justly chargeable with neglecting warnings. And what is the event? These postponers never enter upon religion at all, in earnest or effectually; that is the end and event of the matter. To account for this, shall we say that they have so offended God by neglecting his warnings, as to have forfeited his grace? Certainly we may say, that this is not the method of obtaining his grace; and that his grace is necessary to our conversion. Neglecting warnings is not the way to obtain God's grace; and God's grace is necessary to conversion. The young, I repeat again, want not warnings. Is it new? is it unheard of? is it not, on the contrary, the intelligence of every week, the experience of every neighbourhood, that young men and young women are cut off? Man is in every sense a flower of the field. The flower is liable to be cut down in its bloom and perfection as well as in its withering and its decays. So is man: and one probable cause of this ordination of Providence is, that no one of any age may be so confident of life as to allow himself to transgress God's laws; that all of every age may live in constant awe of their Maker.

I do admit that warnings come the thicker upon us as we grow old: We have more admonitions, both in our remembrances and in our observations, and of more kinds. A man who has passed a long life, has to remember preservations from danger, which ought to inspire him both with thankfulness and caution. Yet I fear we are very deficient in both these qualities. We call our preservations escapes, not preservations; and so we feel no thankfulness for them; nor do we turn them into religious cautions. When God preserved us, he meant to warn us. When such instances, therefore, have no effect upon our minds, we are guilty before God of neglecting his warnings. Most especially if we have occasion to add to all other reasons for gratitude this momentous question, What would have become of us, what would have been our condition, if we had perished in the danger by which our lives were threatened? The parable of the fig-tree, (Luke xiii. ver. 6,) is a most apt Scripture for persons under the circumstances we have described. When the Lord had said, "cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" he was entreated to try it one year longer; and then if it proved not fruitful to cut it down. Christ himself there makes the application twice over, (verses 3d and 5th,) "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." If the present, or if the then state of our conscience and of our souls call up this reflection, then are we very guilty indeed, if such preservations leave no religious impression upon us; or if we suffer the temporary impression to pass off without producing in us a change for the better.

Infirmities, whether they be of health, or of age, decay, and weakness, are warnings. And it has been asked, with some degree of wonder, why they make so little impression as they do? One chief reason is this: they who have waited for warnings of this kind before they would be converted, have generally waited until they are become hardened in sin. Their habits are fixed. Their character has taken its shape and form. Their disposition is thoroughly infected and invested with sin. When it is come to this case, it is difficult for any call to be heard, for any warning to operate. It is difficult, but with God all things are possible. If there be the will and the sincere endeavour to reform, the grace of God can give the power. Although, therefore, they who wait for the advances of age, the perception of decay, the probable approach of death, before they turn themselves seriously to religion, have waited much too long, have neglected, and despised, and defied many solemn warnings in the course of their lives; have waited indeed till it be next to impossible that they turn at all from their former ways: yet this is not a reason why they should continue in neglect of the warnings which now press upon them, and which at length they begin to perceive; but just the contrary. The effort is greater, but the necessity is greater: It is their last hope, and their last trial. I put the case of a man grown old in sin. If the warnings of old age bring him round to religion, happy is that man in his old age above any thing he was in any other part of his life. But if these warnings do not affect him, there is nothing left in this world which will. We are not to set limits to God's grace, operating according to his good pleasure; but we say there is nothing *in this world*, there is nothing in the course of nature and the order of human affairs, which will affect him, if the feelings of age do not. I put the case of a man grown old in sin, and, though old, continuing the practice of sin: that, it is said, in the full latitude of the expression, describes a worse case than is commonly met with. Would to God the case was more rare than it is! But, allowing it to be unusual in the utmost extent of the terms, in a certain considerable degree the description applies to many old persons. Many feel in their hearts that the words "grown old in sin," belong to them in some sense which is very formidable. They feel some dross and defilement to be yet purged away; some deep corruption to be yet eradicated; some virtue or other to be yet even learnt, yet acquired, or yet, however, to be brought nearer to what it ought to be than it has hitherto been brought. Now if the warnings of age taught us nothing else, they might teach us this: that if these things are to be done, they must be done soon; they must be set about forthwith, in good earnest, and with strong resolution. The work is most momentous; the time is short. The day is far spent: the evening is come on: the night is at hand.

Lastly: I conceive that this discourse points out the true and only way of making old age comfortable; and that is, by making it the means of religious improvement. Let a man be beset by ever so many bodily complaints, bowed down by ever so many infirmities, if he find his soul grown and growing better, his seriousness increased, his obedience more regular and more exact, his inward principles and dispositions improved from what they were formerly, and continuing to improve; that man hath a fountain of comfort and consolation springing up within him. Infirmities, which have this effect, are infinitely better than strength and health themselves; though these, considered independently of their consequences, be justly esteemed the greatest of all blessings and of all gifts. The old age of a virtuous man admits of a different and of a most consoling description.

It is this property of old age, namely, that its

proper and most rational comfort consists in the consciousness of spiritual amendment. A very pious writer gives the following representation of this stage of human life, when employed and occupied as it ought to be, and when life has been drawn to its close by a course of virtue and religion. "To the intelligent and virtuous," says our author, "old age presents a scene of tranquil enjoyment, of obedient appetites, of well regulated affections, of maturity in knowledge, and of calm preparation for immortality. In this serene and dignified state, placed, as it were, on the confines of two worlds, the mind of a good man reviews what is passed with the complacency of an approving conscience, and looks forward with humble confidence in the mercy of God, and with devout aspirations towards his eternal and ever increasing favour."

SERMON XXXI.

THE TERRORS OF THE LORD.

What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—Matt. xvi. 26.

These words ask a question, the most home to every man's concern of any that can possibly enter into his thoughts. What our Saviour meant to assert, though proposed to his hearers in the form of a question (which indeed was only a stronger and more affecting way of asserting it,) is, that a man's soul, by which term is here meant his state after death, is so infinitely more important to him, so beyond and above any thing he can get, or any thing he can lose, any thing he can enjoy, or any thing he can suffer on this side the grave, that nothing which the world offers can make up for the loss of it, or be a compensation when that is at stake. You say that this is very evident: I reply, that evident as it is, it is not thought of, it is not considered, it is not believed. The subject, therefore, is very proper to be set forth in those strong and plain terms which such a subject requires, for the purpose of obtaining for it some degree of that attention which each man's own deep interest in the event demands of him to give it.

There are two momentous ideas, which are included in the expression—the loss of a man's soul; and these are, the positive pain and sufferings which he will incur after his death, and the happiness and reward which he will forfeit. Upon both of these points we must go for information to the Scriptures. No where else can we receive any. Now as to the first point, which is, in other words, *the punishment of hell*, I do admit that it is very difficult to handle this dreadful subject properly; and one cause, amongst others, of the difficulty is, that it is not for one poor sinner to denounce such appalling terrors, such tremendous consequences against another. Damnation is a word, which lies not in the mouth of man, who is a worm, towards any of his fellow creatures whatsoever; yet it is absolutely necessary that the threatenings of Almighty God be known and published. Therefore we begin by observing, that the accounts which the Scriptures contain of the punishment of hell, are for the most part delivered in figurative or metaphorical terms; that is to say, in terms which represent things of which we have no notion, by a comparison with things of which we have a notion. Therefore take notice what those figures and metaphors are. They are of the most dreadful kind which words can express: and be they understood how they may, ever so figuratively, it is plain that they convey, and were intended to convey, ideas of horrible torment. They are such as these: "Being cast into hell, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched." It is "burning the chaff with unquenchable fire." It is "going into fire everlasting, which is prepared for the devil and his angels." It is "being cast with all his members into hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." These are heart-appalling expressions: and were undoubtedly intended by the person who used them, (who was no other than our Lord Jesus Christ himself,) to describe terrible endurings; positive, actual pains, of the most horrible kinds. I have said that the punishment of hell is thus represented to us in figurative speech. I now say, that from the nature of things it could hardly have been represented to us in any other. It is of the very nature of pain, that it cannot be known without being felt. It is impossible to give to any one an exact conception of it, without his actually tasting it. Experience alone teaches its acuteness and intensity. For which reason, when it was necessary that the punishment of hell should be set forth in Scripture for our warning, and set forth to terrify us from our sins, it could only be done as it has been done, by comparing it with sufferings of which we can form a conception, and making use of terms drawn from these sufferings. When words less figurative, and more direct, but at the same time more general, are adopted, they are not less strong, otherwise than as they are more general. "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." These are St. Paul's words. It is a short sentence, but enough to make the stoutest heart tremble; for though it unfold no particulars, it clearly designates positive torment. The day of judgment itself, so far as it respects the wicked, is expressly called "a day of wrath." The Lord Jesus, as to them, shall be revealed in flaming fire. How terrible a fate it must be to find ourselves at that day the objects of God's wrath—the objects upon whom his threats and judgments against sin are now to be executed, the revelation of his righteous judgment and of his unerring truth to be displayed—may be conceived, in some sort, by considering what stores of inexhaustible misery are always in his power. With our present constitutions, if we do but touch the smallest part of our bodies, if a nerve in many places goes wrong, what torture do we endure! Let any man who has felt, or rather, whilst he is feeling, the agony of some bodily torment, only reflect what a condition that must be, which had to suffer this *continually*, which night and day was to undergo the same, without prospect of cessation or relief, and thus to go on; and then ask, for what he would knowingly bring himself into this situation; what pleasure, what gain would be an inducement? Let him reflect also, how bitter, how grinding an aggravation of his sufferings, as well as of his guilt, it must be, that he has wilfully, and forewarned, brought all this upon himself.—May it not be necessary that God should manifest his truth by executing his threats?—may it not be necessary that

he should at least testify his justice by placing a wide difference between the good and the bad? between virtue, which he loves, and vice, which he abhors? which difference must consist in the the different state of happiness and of misery in which the good and bad are finally placed. And may we not be made deserved sacrifices to this dispensation?

Now if any one feel his heart struck with the terrors of the Lord, with the consideration of this dreadful subject, and with the declarations of Scripture relating thereto, which will all have their accomplishment; let him be entreated, let him be admonished to hold the idea, tremendous, as it is, fully in his view, till it has wrought its effect, that is, till it has prevailed with him to part with his sins; and then we assure him, that to alarm, fright, and horror, will succeed peace, and hope, and comfort, and joy in the Holy Ghost. There is another way of treating the matter, and that is to shake off the idea if we can; to drown it in intemperance; to overpower it with worldly business; to fly from it in all directions, but mostly in that which carries us to hurrying tumultuous diversions, to criminal indulgencies, or into gross sensuality. Now of this course of proceeding it is certain, that if it lay the mind in any degree at ease in this life, it is at the expense of the inevitable destruction of our souls in the next; which is enough to say against it; but in truth it answers even its present purpose very imperfectly. It is a way of getting rid of the matter, with which even we ourselves are not satisfied. We are sensible that it is a false, treacherous, hollow way of acting towards our own souls. We have no trust in what we are doing. It leaves no peace, no hope, no comfort, no joy.

But to return to the direct subject of our discourse. The Scriptures uniformly represent the wicked as not only suffering positive misery, but also as having lost, by their wickedness, the happiness of heaven, and as being sensible of their loss. They are repeatedly described as *cast out*, or as *shut out*, into outer darkness: whilst the good are entering into the joy of their Lord. This imports a knowledge of their own exclusion. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man being in torments, is made to see Lazarus at rest. This teaches us, that the wicked will be so far informed of the state of the good, as to perceive and bewail, with unutterable anguish and regret, their own sad fate in being refused and rejected, when, had they acted differently, they would have been admitted to it. This is, strictly speaking, losing a man's soul: it is losing that happiness which his soul might have attained, and for which it was made. And here comes the bitter addition of their calamity, that, being lost, it cannot be recovered. The heaven we hear of in Scripture, and the hell we hear of in Scripture, are a heaven and hell depending upon our behaviour in this life. So they are all along spoken of. "Indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anguish, upon every soul of man that *doeth evil:*" meaning evidently the evil done by him in this life; no other evil was in the apostle's thoughts. Or again, more expressly, "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—"The things done in the body," are the things taken into the account.

Now, by the side of this immense consequence of saving or of losing our immortal souls, place any difference that the things of this life can make to us; place riches and poverty, grandeur and humility, success or misfortune; place, more especially, the difference between possessing and sacrificing an unlawful gratification; between compassing and renouncing an unjust purpose; making or giving up an unfair gain; in a word, between the pleasures and temptations of vice, and the self-denials of virtue; and what do they amount to? The objects themselves are nothing when put in competition with heaven and hell.—Were it true, which it is not, that real, solid, inward happiness was proportioned either to outward circumstances, or the indulgencies of our appetites and passions; that the good things, as they are called, and pleasures of life, were as satisfactory to the possessor, as they are, for the most part, deceitful and disappointing, still their duration is nothing. The oldest men, when they cast back their eyes on their past life, see it in a very narrow compass. It appears no more than a small interval cut out of eternal duration, both before and after it; when compared with that duration as nothing. But we must add to this two other questions. Can life be counted upon to last to what is called old age? No man, who observes the deaths that take place in his neighbourhood, or amongst his acquaintance, will so compute. Or, secondly, do the pleasures of sin last as long as our lives? We may answer, *never;* with the single dreadful exception of the sinner being cut off in his prime. Whoever looks for permanent happiness from the pleasures of sin will find himself miserably mistaken. They are short, even compared with our short lives; subject to casualties and disasters without number; transitory, not only as the things of this world are transitory, but in a much greater degree. It will be said, however, that though this observation may be true of the pleasures of sin, yet an advantage gained by sin, that is, by unrighteous, unconscious means, may nevertheless, remain an advantage as long as we live. This may sometimes be the case; and such advantage may be so long enjoyed, if that can be enjoyed which has a fearful expectation and looking-for of judgment annexed to it. But what is the term of that enjoyment compared with the sequel? It is a moment, the twinkling of an eye, compared with a day; an hour compared with a year; a single day with a long life. It is less than these; for all these comparisons are short of the truth. Well therefore doth our Saviour ask, "What doth a man profit if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" That world, when gained, he could not keep; nor, if he could, would it make him happy.

But our Saviour delivered his powerful admonition, not so much for his disciples to reason upon, as to carry into practice; that is, that his words might strike into their souls upon these occasions (which are but too many,) when the business, the bustle, or the allurements of the world are in danger of shutting out futurity from their thoughts. —These are the times for calling to mind our Saviour's question. Whenever, therefore, we are driving on in the career of worldly prosperity; meeting with success after success; fortunate, rich, and flourishing; when every thing appears to thrive and smile around us; but *conscience*, in the meantime, little heeded and attended to; the justice, the

integrity, the uprightness of our ways, and of our dealings seldom weighed and scrutinized by us; religion very much, or entirely, perhaps, out of the question with us; soothed and buoyed up with that self-applause which success naturally begets; —in this no very uncommon state of soul, it will be well if we hear our Saviour's voice asking us, what does all this prosperity signify? if it do not lead to heaven, what is it worth? When the scene is shifted, if nothing but death and darkness remain behind; much more, if God Almighty be all this while offended by our forgetfulness both of his mercies and his laws, our neglect of his service, our indevotion, our thoughtlessness, our disobedience, our love of the world to the exclusion of all consideration of Him; if we be assured, and if, in reality, it be the case, that his displeasure shall infallibly overtake us at our death; what in truth, under all this appearance of advantage, are we getting or gaining? The world may amuse us with names and terms of felicitation, with their praises or their envy, but wherein are we the better in the amount and result of substantial happiness? We have got our aim, and what is the end of it? Death is preparing to level us with the poorest of mankind; and after that, a fearful looking-for and expectation of judgment; no well founded hopes of happiness beyond the grave; and we drawing sensibly nearer to that grave every year. This is the sum of the account. Or, which is another case no less apposite to our present argument, is it some sensual pleasure that tempts us, some wicked enjoyment that has taken such hold of our passions, that we are ready to rush upon it whatever be the consequence? If we gain our object; if we possess our wishes, we are happy: but what, if we lose our own souls? what, if we find ourselves condemned men for hardily venturing upon crimes, which will, and which we were forewarned that they would, render, us the objects of God's final indignation and displeasure? Will any gratifications which sin affords be a recompense or a consolation? Are they so even for the diseases, shame, and ruin, which they often bring upon men in this world? Ask those who are so ruined or so diseased. How much less then for the gnawings of that worm which dieth not; the burnings of that fire which will not be quenched? In hopeless torment, will it assuage our sufierings, or mitigate the bitterness of our self-accusation, to know that we have brought ourselves into this state for some transient pleasure which is gone, lost and perished forever? Oh that we had thought of these things before as we think of them now! that we had not been infidels as touching our Lord's declaration! that we had believed in him; and that believing that he had a perfect knowledge of the future fate of mankind, and of the truth of what he taught, we had listened in time to his admonition!

Universally the true occasion for remembering and applying the passage of Scripture before us is, when we are deliberating concerning the conduct we are to pursue in the contests which arise between temptation and duty, between the flesh and the world, or between both united and our own souls. Be the temptation what it will, either in kind or strength, this is the thought to be for ever set against it. That if we give way, we give way in exchange for our own souls; that the perdition of the soul is set forth in Scripture in terms most tremendous, but not more tremendous than true; that the sinner, the man involved in unrepented, unforsaken sins, can never know how soon he may be reduced to this state.

SERMON XXXII.

PRESERVATION AND RECOVERY FROM SIN.

For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.—Titus ii. 11, 12.

THERE are certain particular texts of Scripture which are of inestimable use; for that in a few, short, clear words, they show us the sum of our duty. Such texts ought to be deeply infixed and imprinted upon our memories; to be written, indeed, upon our hearts. The text which I have read to you, is entitled to this distinction. No single sentence that ever was written down for the direction of mankind, comprises more important truth in less room. The text gives us a rule of life and conduct; and tells us, that to lay down for mankind this rule, and enforce it by the promise of salvation, was a great object of the Gospel being published in the world. The Gospel might include other objects, and answer other purposes; but as far as related to the regulation of life and conduct, this was its object and its purpose. The rule, you hear, is, that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." We must begin "by *denying* ungodliness and worldly lusts:" which means, that we must resist or break off all sins of licentiousness, debauchery, and intemperance; for these are what are specifically meant by worldly lusts. And these must be *denied;* that is, they must either be withstood in the first instance, or the evil courses into which they have drawn us must be broken off.

When a rule of morals is plain and positive, it is seldom that there is any advantage in enlarging upon the rule itself. We only weaken it by dilating it. I shall employ, therefore, my present discourse in offering such heads of advice as may be likely, by God's blessing, to assist us in rendering obedience to the rule laid down for us; an obedience upon which salvation depends.

First, then, I observe concerning licentious practices, that it is most practicable to be entirely innocent; that it is a more easy thing to withstand them altogether, than it is to set bounds to their indulgence. This is a point not sufficiently understood; though true, it is not believed. Men know not what they are doing when they enter upon vicious courses: what a struggle, what a contest, what misery, what torment, they are preparing for themselves. I trust that there is hardly a man or woman living who enters into a course of sin with the design of remaining in it to the end; who can brave the punishment of hell; who intends to die in that state of sure perdition, to which a course of unrepented sin must bring him or her. No; that is not the plan even of the worst, much less of the generality of mankind. Their plan is to allow themselves to a certain length, and there stop; for a certain time, and then reform; in such and such opportunties and temptations, but in no

more. Now, to such persons, and to such plans, I say this, that it would not have cost them one tenth of the mortification, pain, and self-denial, to have kept themselves at a distance from sin, that it must and will cost them to break it off; adding the further consideration, that, so long as men preserve their innocence, the consciousness of doing what is right is both the strongest possible support of their resolution, and the most constant source of satisfaction to their thoughts; but that when men once begin to give way to vicious indulgences, another state of things takes place in their breasts. Disturbance at the heart, struggles and defeats, resolutions and relapses, self-reproach and self-condemnation, drive out all quietness and tranquillity of conscience. Peace within is at an end. All is unsettled. Did the young and unexperienced know the truth of this matter; how much easier it is to keep innocency than to return to it; how great and terrible is the danger that they do not return to it at all; surely they would see, and see in a light strong enough to influence their determination, that to adhere inviolably to the rules of temperance, soberness, and chastity, was their safety, their wisdom, their happiness. How many bitter thoughts does the innocent man avoid? Serenity and cheerfulness are his portion. Hope is continually pouring its balm into his soul. His heart is at rest, whilst others are goaded and tortured by the stings of a wounded conscience, the remonstrances and risings up of principles which they cannot forget; perpetually teased by returning temptations, perpetually lamenting defeated resolutions. "There is no peace unto the wicked, saith my God." There is no comfort in such a life as this, let a man's outward circumstances be what they will. Genuine satisfaction of mind is not attainable under the recurring consciousness of being immersed in a course of sin, and the still remaining prevalence of religious principles. Yet either this must be the state of a sinner till he recover again his virtuous courses, or it must be a state infinitely worse; that is, it must be a state of entire surrender of himself to a life of sin, which will be followed by a death of despair; by ruin final and eternal; by the wrath of God; by the pains of hell.

But, secondly, In what manner, and by what methods are sins to be broken off? for although the maxim which we have delivered be perfectly and certainly true, namely, that it is ease and happiness to preserve innocence entirely, compared with what it is to recover our innocence, or even to set bounds to guilt, yet it is a truth which all cannot receive. I do not mean that all will not acknowledge it, for I believe that those will be most ready to give their assent to it, who feel themselves bound and entangled by the chain of their sin. But it is not applicable to every man's case; because many having already fallen into vicious courses, have no longer to consider how much better, how much happier it would have been for them, to have adhered closely to the laws of virtue and religion at first, but how to extricate themselves from the bad condition in which they are placed at present. Now to expect to break off sin in any manner without pain and difficulty, is a vain expectation. It is to expect a moral impossibility. Such expectations ought not to be held out, because they are sure to deceive; and because they who act under such encouragement, finding themselves deceived, will never persist in their endeavours to any purpose of actual reformation. All mankind feel a reluctance to part with their sins. It must be so. It arises from the very nature of temptation, by which they are drawn into sin. Feeling then this strong reluctance, it is very natural for men to do what great numbers do, namely, propose to themselves to part with their sins by *degrees;* thinking that they can more easily do it in this way than in any other. It presents to their view a kind of compromise; a temporary hope of enjoying, for the present at least, the criminal pleasures to which they have addicted themselves, or the criminal advantages they are making, together with the expectation of a final reform. I believe, as I have already said, that this is a course into which great numbers fall; and therefore it becomes a question of very great importance whether it be a safe and successful course or not. What I am speaking of is the trying to break off our sins by degrees. Now, in the first place, it is contrary to principle. A man is supposed to feel the guilt and danger of the practices which he follows. He must be supposed to perceive this, because he is supposed to resolve to quit them. His resolution is founded upon, springs from this perception. Wherefore, I say, that it is in contradiction to principle, to allow ourselves even once more in sin, after we have truly become sensible of the guilt, the danger, and the consequences of it. It is from that time known and wilful sin. I own I do not see how the plan of gradually diminishing a sinful habit can be consistent with, or can proceed from sincere religious principles; for, as to what remains of the habit, it implies an express allowance of ourselves in sin, which is utterly inconsistent with sincerity. Whoever continues in the practice of any one known sin, in defiance of God's commands, cannot, so continuing, hope to find mercy: but with respect to so much of the habit as is yet allowed by him to remain, he is so continuing, and his continuance is part of his plan. These attempts, therefore, at gradual reformation, do not proceed from a true vital religious principle; which principle, succoured by God's grace, is the only thing that can stand against sin, strengthened by habit. So I should reason, upon the case, looking at it in its own nature. The next question is, How is it in fact? Is it in fact better, is it in experience more successful, than from its nature we should expect it to be? Now I am much afraid, that all the proof which can be drawn either from observation or consciousness is against it. Of other men we must judge by observation; of ourselves by consciousness. What happens then to gradual reformation? Perpetual relapses, perpetually defeated and weakened resolutions. The principle of resistance is weakened by every relapse. Did the mortification of a defeat incite and quicken men to stronger efforts, it would be well. But it has a contrary effect; it renders every succeeding exertion more feeble. The checked indulgences, which in the progress of our fancied amendment we allow ourselves, are more than sufficient to feed desire, to keep up the force and strength of temptation; nay, perhaps the temptation acquires more force from the partial curb which we impose upon it. Then, while the temptation remains with unabated, or perhaps augmented strength, our resolution is suffering continual relaxation;

our endeavours become unsatisfactory even to ourselves. This miserable struggle cannot be maintained long. Although nothing but persevering in it could save us, we do not persevere. Finding not ease, but difficulty increased, and increasing difficulty, men give up the cause; that is, they try to settle themselves into some mode of thinking which may quiet their consciences and their fears. They fall back to their sins: and when they find their consciences easier, they think their guilt less; whereas it is only their conscience that is become more insensible; their reasoning more treacherous and deceitful! The danger is what it was, or greater; the guilt is so too. Would to God we could say, that gradual reforms were frequently successful; They are what men often attempt; they are, alas! what men usually fail in.

It is painful to seem to discourage endeavours of any kind after amendment; but it is necessary to advertise men of their danger. If one method of going about an important work be imposing in expectation, and yet in truth likely to end in ruin; can any thing be more necessary than to set forth this danger and this consequence plainly? This is precisely the case with gradual reforms. They do not very much alarm our passions: they soothe our consciences. They do not alarm our passions, because the absolute rupture is not to come yet. We are not yet entirely and totally to bid adieu to our pleasures and indulgences, never to enjoy or return to them any more. We only have in view to wean and withdraw ourselves from them by degrees; and this is not so harsh and formidable a resolution as the other. Yet it soothes our consciences. It presents the semblance and appearance of repenting and reforming. It confesses our sense of sin and danger. It takes up the purpose, it would fain encourage us with the hope, of delivering ourselves from this condition. But what is the result? Feeding in the mean time and fomenting those passions which are to be controlled and resisted; adding, by every instance of giving way to them, fresh force and strength to habits which are to be broken off, our constancy is subdued before our work is accomplished. We continue yielding to the importunity of temptation. We have gained nothing by our miserable endeavour, but the mortification of defeat. Our sins are still repeated. The state of our salvation is where it was. Oh! it is a laborious, a difficult, a painful work to shake off sin; to change the course of a sinful life; to quit gratifications to which we have been accustomed, because we perceive them to be unlawful gratifications; and to find satisfaction in others which are innocent and virtuous. If in one thing more than another we stand in need of God's holy succour and assistance, of the aid and influence of his blessed Spirit upon our souls, it is in the work of reformation. But can we reasonably expect it, whilst we are not sincere? And I say again, that the plan of gradual reformation is in contradiction to principle, and so far insincere. Is there not reason to believe that this may in some measure account for the failure of these resolutions?

But it will be asked of us, what better plan have we to offer? We answer, to break off our sins *at once*. This is properly to *deny* ungodliness and worldly lusts. This is truly to do, what, according to the apostle, the grace of God teaches us to do. Acting thus, we may pray, we may humbly hope for the assistance of God's Spirit in the work and struggle through which we have to go. And I take upon me to say, that all experience is in favour of this plan, in preference to that of a gradual reform; in favour of it, both with respect to practicability, and with respect to ease and happiness. We do not pretend but that a conflict with desire must be supported; that great resolution is necessary; yet we teach that the pain of the effort is lessened by this method, as far as it can be lessened at all. Passions *denied*, firmly denied and resisted, and not kept up by occasional indulgences, lose their power of tormenting. Habits, absolutely and totally disused, lose their hold. It is the nature of man. They then leave us at liberty to seek and to find happiness elsewhere, in better things; to enjoy as well as to practise virtue; to draw comfort from religion; to dwell upon its hopes; to pursue its duties; to acquire a love, a taste, and relish for its exercises and meditations.

One very general cause of entanglement in habits of sin is the connexion which they have with our way of life, with our business, with the objects that are continually thrown in our way, with the practices and usages which prevail in the company we keep. Every condition of life has its particular temptation. And not only so, but when we have fallen into evil habits, these habits so mix themselves with our method of life, return so upon us at their usual times and places, and occurrence of objects, that it becomes very difficult to break the habit, without a general change of our whole system. Now I say, whenever this is a man's case, that he cannot shake off his sins without giving up his way of life, he must give up that also, let it cost what it will; for it is in truth no other sacrifice than what our Saviour himself in the strongest terms enjoins, when he bids his disciples to pluck out a right eye, or cut off a right hand (that is, surrender whatever is most dear or valuable to them,) that they be not cast with all their members into hell fire. If a trade or business cannot be followed without giving into practices which conscience does not approve, we must relinquish the trade or business itself. If it cannot be followed without bringing us into the way of temptation to intemperance, more than we can withstand, or in fact do withstand, we must also relinquish it, and turn ourselves to some safer course. If the company we keep, the conversation we hear, the objects that surround us, tend to draw us, and do in fact draw us, into debauchery and licentiousness, we must fly from the place, the company, and the objects, no matter with what reluctance we do so, or what loss and inconvenience we suffer by doing it. This may appear to be a hard lesson: it is, nevertheless, what right reason dictates, and what, as hath already been observed, our Saviour himself enjoins, in terms made as strong and forcible as he could make them.

Sometimes men are led by prudential motives, or by motives of mere inclination, to change their employment, their habitation, or their station of life. These occasions afford excellent and invaluable opportunities for correcting and breaking off any vicious habits which we may have contracted. It is when many associations, which give strength to a sinful habit, are interrupted and dissolved by the change which has taken place, that we can best resolve to conquer the sin, and set out upon a new course and a new life. The man who

does not take advantage of such opportunities when they arise, has not the salvation of his soul at heart: nevertheless, they are not to be waited for.

But to those sudden changes which we recommend, will it be objected that they are seldom lasting? Is this the fact? Are they more liable to fail, than attempts to change gradually? I think not. And there is always this difference between them. A sudden change is sincere at the time; a gradual change never is such truly and properly: and this is a momentous distinction. In every view, and in every allowance, and in every plea of human frailty, we must distinguish between what is consistent with sincerity, and what is not. And in these two methods of setting about a reformation, by reason of their different character in this respect, the first may, though with fear and humility, expect the help of God's aiding Spirit, the other hardly can. For whilst, not by surprise and unpremeditatedly, we fall into casual sins, but whilst, by plan and upon system, we allow ourselves in licenses, which, though not so many or so great as before, are still, whenever they are indulged, so many known sins; whilst, in a word, though we imagine ourselves to be in a progress of amendment, we yet deliberately continue to sin, our endeavours are so corrupted, I will not say by imperfection, but by insincerity, that we can hardly hope to call down upon them the blessing of Almighty God.

Reformation is never impossible; nor, in a strict sense, can it be said to be doubtful. Nothing is, properly speaking, doubtful, which it is in a man's power to accomplish; nothing is doubtful to us, but what is placed out of the reach of our will, or depends upon causes which we cannot influence; and this is not the case with reformation from sin. On the other hand, if we look to experience, we are compelled, though with grief of heart, to confess that the danger is very great of a man, who is engaged in a course of sin, never reforming from his sin at all. Oh! let this danger be known. Let it stand, like a flaming sword, to turn us aside from the road to vice. Let it offer itself in its full magnitude. Let it strike, as it ought, the souls of those who are upon the brink, perhaps, of their whole future fate; who are tempted; and who are deliberating about entering upon some course of sin.

Let also the perception and convincement of this danger sink deep into the hearts of all who are in such a situation, as that they must either reform or perish. They have it in their power, and it must be now their only hope, by strong and firm exertion, to make themselves an exception to the general lot of habitual sinners. It must be an exception. If they leave things to their course, they will share the fate in which they see others, involved in guilt like themselves, end their lives. It is only by a most strenuous effort they can rescue themselves from it. We apprise them, that their best hope is in a sudden and complete change, sincerely begun, faithfully persisted in; broken, it is possible, by human frailty, but never changed into a different plan, never declining into a compromised, partial, gradual reform; on the contrary, resumed with the same sincerity as that with which it set out, and with a force of resolution, and an earnestness of prayer, increased in proportion to the clearer view they have acquired of their danger and of their want.

SERMON XXXIII.

THIS LIFE A STATE OF PROBATION.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.—Psalm cxix. 71.

Of the various views under which human life has been considered, no one seems so reasonable as that which regards it as a state of probation; meaning, by a state of probation, a state calculated for trying us, and calculated for improving us. A state of complete enjoyment and happiness it certainly is not. The hopes, the spirits, and the inexperience of young men and young women are apt, and very willing, to see it in this light. To them life is full of entertainment; their relish is high; their expectations unbounded: for a very few years it is possible, and I think barely possible, that they may go on without check or interruption; but they will be cured of this delusion. Pain and sorrow, disease and infirmity, accident and disappointment, losses and distress, will soon meet them in their acquaintance, their families, or their persons. The hard-hearted for their own, the tender for others' wo, will always find and feel enough at least to convince them, that this world was not made for a scene of perpetual gayety or uninterrupted enjoyment.

Still less can we believe that it was made for a place of misery: so much otherwise, that misery is in no instance the end or object of contrivance. We are surrounded by contrivance and design. A human body is a cluster of contrivances. So is the body of every animal; so is the structure of every plant; so is even the vilest weed that grows upon the road-side. Contrivances, therefore, infinite in number, infinite also in variety, are all directed to beneficial purposes, and, in a vast plurality of instances, execute their purpose. In our own bodies only reflect how many thousand things must go right for us to be an hour at ease. Yet at all times multitudes are so; and are so without being sensible how great a thing it is. Too much or too little of sensibility, or of action, in any one of the almost numberless organs, or of any part of the numberless organs, by which life is sustained, may be productive of extreme anguish or of lasting infirmity. A particle, smaller than an atom in a sun-beam, may, in a wrong place, be the occasion of the loss of limbs, of senses, or of life. Yet under all this continual jeopardy, this momentary liability to danger and disorder, we are preserved. It is not possible, therefore, that this state could be designed as a state of misery, because the great tendency of the designs which we see in the universe, is to counteract, to prevent, to guard against it. We know enough of nature to be assured, that misery, universal, irremediable, inexhaustible misery, was in the Creator's power if he had willed it. Forasmuch, therefore, as the result is so much otherwise, we are certain that no such purpose dwelt in the divine mind.

But since, amidst much happiness, and amidst contrivances *for* happiness, so far as we can judge, (and of many we can judge,) misery, and very considerable portions of it do exist, it becomes a natural inquiry, to what end this mixture of good and evil is properly adapted? And I think the Scriptures place before us, not only the true, (for, if we believe the Scriptures, we must believe it to be *that*,) but the most rational and satisfac-

tory answer which can be given to the inquiry; namely, that it is intended for a state of trial and probation. For it appears to me capable of proof, both that no state but one, which contained in it an admixture of good and evil, would be suited to this purpose; and also that our present state, as well in its general plan as in its particular properties, serves this purpose with peculiar propriety.

A state, totally incapable of misery, could not be a state of probation. It would not be a state in which virtue or vice could even be exercised at all —I mean that large class of virtues and vices, which we comprehend under the name of social duties. The existence of these depends upon the existence of misery as well as of happiness in the world, and of different degrees of both; because their very nature and difference consists in promoting or preventing, in augmenting or diminishing, in causing, aggravating, or relieving the wants, sufferings, and distresses of our fellow-creatures. Compassion, charity, humanity, benevolence, and even justice, could have no place in the world, if there were not human conditions to excite them; objects and sufferings upon which they might operate; misery, as well as happiness, which might be affected by them.

Nor would, in my opinion, the purposes of trial be sufficiently provided for, by a state in which happiness and misery regularly followed virtue and vice; I mean, in which there was no happiness, but what was merited by virtue; no misery but what was brought on by vice. Such a state would be a state of retribution, not a state of probation. It may be our state hereafter; it may be a better state; but it is not a state of probation, it is not the state through which it is fitting we should pass before we enter into the other; for when we speak of a state of probation, we speak of a state in which the character may both be put to the proof, and also its good qualities be confirmed and strengthened, if not formed and produced, by having occasions presented in which they may be called forth and required. Now, beside that, the social qualities which have been mentioned would be very limited in their exercise, if there was no evil in the world but what was plainly a punishment, (for though we might pity, and even that would be greatly checked, we could not actually succour or relieve, without disturbing the execution, or arresting, as it were, the hand of justice;) beside this difficulty, there is another class of most important duties which would be in a great measure excluded. They are the severest, the sublimest, perhaps the most meritorious, of which we are capable; I mean patience and composure under distress, pain, and affliction; a steadfast keeping up of our confidence in God, and our dependence upon his final goodness, even at the time that every thing present is discouraging and adverse; and, what is no less difficult to retain, a cordial desire for the happiness and comfort of others, even then, when we are deprived of our own. I say, that the possession of this temper is almost the perfection of our nature. But it is then only possessed, when it is put to the trial: tried at all, it could not have been in a life made up only of pleasure and gratification. Few things are easier than to perceive, to feel, to acknowledge, to extol the goodness of God, the bounty of Providence, the beauties of nature, when all things go well; when our health, our spirits, our circumstances, conspire to fill our hearts with gladness, and our tongues with praise. This is easy; this is delightful. None but they who are sunk in sensuality, sottishness, and stupefaction, or whose understandings are dissipated by frivolous pursuits; none but the most giddy and insensible can be destitute of these sentiments. But this is not the trial or the proof. It is in the chambers of sickness; under the stroke of affliction; amidst the pinchings of want, the groans of pain, the pressures of infirmity; in grief, in misfortune; through gloom and horror—that it will be seen whether we hold fast our hope, our confidence, our trust in God; whether this hope and confidence be able to produce in us resignation, acquiescence, and submission. And as those dispositions, which perhaps form the comparative perfection of our moral nature, could not have been exercised in a world of unmixed gratification, so neither would they have found their proper office or object in a state of strict and evident retribution; that is, in which we had no sufferings to submit to, but what were evidently and manifestly the punishment of our sins. A mere submission to punishment, evidently and plainly such, would not have constituted, at least would very imperfectly have constituted the disposition which we speak of, the true resignation of a Christian.

It seems, therefore, to be argued, with very great probability, from the general economy of things around us, that our present state was meant for a state of probation; because positively it contains that admixture of good and evil which ought to be found in such a state to make it answer its purpose—the production, exercise, and improvement of virtue; and, because negatively, it could not be intended either for a state of absolute happiness, or a state of absolute misery, neither of which it is.

We may now also observe in what manner many of the evils of life are adjusted to this particular end, and how also they are contrived to soften and alleviate themselves and one another. It will be enough at present, if I can point out how far this is the case in the two instances, which, of all others, the most nearly and seriously affect us—death and disease. The events of life and death are so disposed, as to beget, in all reflecting minds, a constant watchfulness. "What I say unto you I say unto all, watch." Hold yourselves in a constant state of preparation. "Be ready, for you know not when your Lord cometh." Had there been assigned to our lives a certain age or period, to which all, or almost all, were sure of arriving: in the younger part, that is to say, in nine tenths of the whole of mankind, there would have been such an absolute security as would have produced, it is much to be feared, the utmost neglect of duty, of religion, of God, of themselves; whilst the remaining part would have been too much overcome with the certainty of their fate, would have too much resembled the condition of those who have before their eyes a fixed and appointed day of execution. The same consequence would have ensued if death had followed any known rule whatever. It would have produced security in one part of the species, and despair in another. The first would have been in the highest degree dangerous to the character; the second, insupportable to the spirits. The same observation we are entitled to repeat concerning the two cases—of sudden death, and of death brought on by long disease. If sudden deaths never occurred,

those who found themselves free from disease would be in perfect safety; they would regard themselves as out of the reach of danger. With all apprehensions they would lose all seriousness and all restraint: and those persons who the most want to be checked and to be awakened to a sense of the consequences of virtue and vice, the strong, the healthy, and the active, would be without the greatest of all checks, that which arises from the constant liability of being called to judgment. If there were no sudden deaths, the most awful warning which mortals can receive would be lost: That consideration which carries the mind the most forcibly to religion, which convinces us that it is indeed our proper concern, namely, the precariousness of our present condition, would be done away. On the other hand, if sudden deaths were too frequent, human life might become too perilous: there would not be stability and dependence either upon our own lives or the lives of those with whom we were connected, sufficient to carry on the regular offices of human society. In this respect, therefore, we see much wisdom. Supposing death to be appointed as the mode (and some mode there must be) of passing from one state of existence to another, the manner in which it is made to happen, conduces to the purposes of warning and admonition, without overthrowing the conduct of human affairs.

Of sickness, the moral and religious use will be acknowledged, and, in fact, is acknowledged, by all who have experienced it; and they who have not experienced it, own it to be a fit state for the meditations, the offices of religion. The fault, I fear, is, that we refer ourselves too much to that state. We think of these things too little in health, because we shall necessarily have to think of them when we come to die. This is a great fault; but then it confesses, what is undoubtedly true, that the sick-bed and the death-bed shall inevitably force these reflections upon us. In that it is right, though it be wrong in waiting till the season of actual virtue and actual reformation be past, and when, consequently, the sick-bed and the death-bed can bring nothing but uncertainty, horror, and despair. But my present subject leads me to consider sickness, not so much as a preparation for death as the trial of our virtues; of virtues the most severe, the most arduous, perhaps the best pleasing to Almighty God; namely, trust and confidence in him under circumstances of discouragement and perplexity. To lift up the feeble hands and the languid eye; to draw and turn with holy hope to our Creator, when every comfort forsakes us, and every help fails; to feel and find in him, in his mercies, his promises, in the works of his providence, and still more in his word, and in the revelation of his designs by Jesus Christ, such rest and consolation to the soul as to stifle our complaints and pacify our murmurs; to beget in our hearts tranquillity and confidence in the place of terror and consternation, and this with simplicity and sincerity, without having, or wishing to have, one human witness to observe or know it,—is such a test and trial of faith and hope, of patience and devotion, as cannot fail of being in a very high degree well-pleasing to the Author of our natures, the guardian, the inspector, and the rewarder of our virtues. It is true in this instance, as it is true in all, that whatever tries our virtue strengthens and improves it. Virtue comes out of the fire purer and brighter than it went into it. Many virtues are not only proved but produced by trials: they have properly no existence without them. "We glory," saith St. Paul, "in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope."

But of sickness we may likewise remark, how wonderfully it reconciles us to the thoughts, the expectation, and the approach of death; and how this becomes, in the hand of Providence, an example of one evil being made to correct another. Without question, the difference is wide between the sensations of a person who is condemned to die by violence, and of one who is brought gradually to his end by the progress of disease; and this difference sickness produces. To the Christian whose mind is not harrowed up by the memory of unrepented guilt, the calm and gentle approach of his dissolution has nothing in it terrible. In that sacred custody in which they that sleep in Christ will be preserved, he sees a rest from pain and weariness, from trouble and distress: Gradually withdrawn from the cares and interests of the world; more and more weaned from the pleasures of the body, and feeling the weight and pressure of its infirmities, he may be brought almost to desire with St. Paul to be no longer absent from Christ; knowing, as he did, and as he assures us, that "if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

SERMON XXXIV.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF ONE ANOTHER IN A FUTURE STATE.

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.—Col. i. 28.

These words have a primary and a secondary use. In their first and most obvious view, they express the extreme earnestness and anxiety with which the apostle Paul sought the salvation of his converts. To bring men to Jesus Christ, and, when brought, to turn and save them from their sins, and to keep them steadfast unto the end in the faith and obedience to which they were called, was the whole work of the great apostle's ministry, the desire of his heart, and the labour of his life: it was that in which he spent all his time and all his thought; for the sake of which he travelled from country to country, warning every man, as he speaks in the text, and exhorting every man, enduring every hardship and every injury, ready at all times to sacrifice his life, and at last actually sacrificing it, in order to accomplish the great purpose of his mission, that he might at the last day present his beloved converts perfect in Christ Jesus. This is the direct scope of the text. But it is not for this that I have made choice of it. The last clause of the verse contains within it, indirectly and by implication, a doctrine certainly of great personal importance, and, I trust, also of great comfort to every man who hears me. The clause is this, "That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:" by which I understand St. Paul

to express his hope and prayer, that at the general judgment of the world, he might present to Christ the fruits of his ministry, the converts whom he had made to his faith and religion, and might present them perfect in every good work. And if this be rightly interpreted, then it affords a manifest and necessary inference, that the saints in a future life will meet and be known again to one another; for how, without knowing again his converts in their new and glorified state, could St. Paul desire or expect to present them at the last day?

My brethren, this is a doctrine of real consequence. That we shall come again to a new life; that we shall, by some method or other, be made happy, or be made miserable, in that new state, according to the deeds done in the body, according as we have acted and governed ourselves in this world, is a point affirmed absolutely and positively, in all shapes, and under every variety of expression, in almost every page of the New Testament. It is the grand point inculcated from the beginning to the end of that book. But concerning the particular nature of the change we are to undergo, and in what is to consist the employment and happiness of those blessed spirits which are received into heaven, our information, even under the Gospel, is very limited. We own it is so. Even St. Paul, who had extraordinary communications, confessed, "that in these things we see through a glass darkly." But at the same time that we acknowledge that we know little, we ought to remember, that without Christ we should have known nothing. It might not be possible, in our own present state, to convey to us, by words, more clear or explicit conceptions of what will hereafter become of us; if possible, it might not be fitting. In that celebrated chapter, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, St. Paul makes an inquisitive person ask, "How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?" From his answer to this question we are able, I think, to collect thus much clearly and certainly: that at the resurrection we shall have bodies of some sort or other: that they will be totally different from, and greatly excelling, our present bodies, though possibly in some manner or other proceeding from them, as a plant from its seed: that as there exists in nature a great variety of animal substances; one flesh of man, another of beasts, another of birds, another of fishes; as there exists also great differences in the nature, dignity, and splendour of inanimate substances, "one glory of the sun, another of the moon, another of the stars;" so there subsist, likewise, in the magazines of God Almighty's creation, two very distinct kinds of bodies, (still both bodies,) a natural body and a spiritual body: that the natural body is what human beings bear about with them now; the spiritual body, far surpassing the other, what the blessed will be clothed with hereafter. "Flesh and blood," our apostle teaches, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" that is, is by no means suited to that state, is not capable of it. Yet living men are flesh and blood; the dead in the graves are the remains of the same: wherefore to make all who are Christ's capable of entering into his eternal kingdom, and at all fitted for it, a great change shall be suddenly wrought. As well all the just who shall be alive at the coming of Christ, (whenever that event takes place,) as those who shall be raised from the dead, shall, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed. Bodies they shall retain still, but so altered in form and fashion, in nature and substance, that "this corruptible shall put on incorruption;" what is now necessarily mortal and necessarily perishable, shall acquire a fixed and permanent existence. And this is agreeable to, or rather the same thing as, what our apostle delivers in another epistle, where he teaches us, that "Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body;" a change so great, so stupendous, that he justly styles it an act of omnipotence: "according," says he, "to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." Since, then, a great alteration will take place in the frame and constitution of the bodies with which we shall be raised, from those which we carry with us to the grave, it requires some authority or passage of Scripture to prove, that after this change, and in this new state, we shall be known again to one another; that those who know each other on earth, will know each other in heaven. I do allow, that the general strain of Scripture seems to suppose it; that when St. Paul speaks "of the spirits of just men made perfect," and of their "coming to the general assembly of saints," it seems to import that we should be known of them, and of one another; that when Christ declares, "that the secrets of the heart shall be disclosed," it imports, that they shall be disclosed to those who were before the witnesses of our actions. I do also think that it is agreeable to the dictates of reason itself to believe, that the same great God who brings men to life again, will bring those together whom death has separated. When his power is at work in this great dispensation, it is very probable that this should be a part of his gracious design. But for a specific text, I know none which speaks the thing more positively than this which I have chosen. St. Paul, you see, expected that he should know, and be known to those his converts; that their relation should subsist and be retained between them; and with this hope he laboured and endeavoured, instantly and incessantly, that he might be able at last to present them, and to present them perfect in Christ Jesus. Now what St. Paul appeared to look for as to the general continuance, or rather revival, of our knowledge of each other after death, every man who strives, like St. Paul, to attain to the resurrection of the dead, may expect, as well as he.

Having discoursed thus far concerning the article of the doctrine itself, I will now proceed to enforce such practical reflections as result from it. Now it is necessary for you to observe, that all which is here produced from Scripture concerning the resurrection of the dead, relates solely to the resurrection of the just. It is of them only that St. Paul speaks in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. It is of the body of him, who is accepted in Christ, that the apostle declares, that it "is sown in dishonour, but raised in glory: sown in weakness, raised in power." Likewise, when he speaks, in another place, of "Christ's changing our vile bodies that they may be like his glorious body," it is of the body of Christ's saints alone, of whom this is said. This point is, I think, agreed upon amongst learned men, and is indeed very plain. In like manner, in the passage of the text, and, I think, it will be found true of every other in which mankind knowing one another in a future life is implied, the implication extends only to those who are received amongst the

blessed. Whom was St. Paul to know? even those whom he was to present perfect in Christ Jesus. Concerning the reprobate and rejected, whether they will not be banished from the presence of God, and from all their former relations; whether they will not be lost, as to all happiness of their own, so to the knowledge of those who knew them in this mortal state, we have, from Scripture, no assurance or intimation whatever. One thing seems to follow with probability from the nature of the thing, namely, that if the wicked be known to one another in a state of perdition, their knowledge will only serve to aggravate their misery.

What then is the inference from all this? Do we seek, do we covet earnestly to be restored to the society of those who were once near and dear to us, and who are gone before?—It is only by leading godly lives that we can hope to have this wish accomplished. Should we prefer, to all delights, to all pleasures in the world, the satisfaction of meeting again in happiness and peace, those whose presence, whilst they were among us, made up the comfort and enjoyment of our lives? —It must be, by giving up our sins, by parting with our criminal delights and guilty pursuits, that we can ever expect to attain this satisfaction. Is there a great difference between the thought of losing those we love for ever; of taking at their deaths or our own an eternal farewell, never to see them more—and the reflection that we are about to be separated, for a few years at the longest, to be united with them in a new and better state of mutual existence? Is there, I say, a difference to the heart of man between these two things? and does it not call upon us to strive with redoubled endeavours, that the case truly may turn out so? The more and more we reflect upon the difference between the consequences of a lewd, unthinking, careless, profane, dishonest life, and a life of religion, sobriety, seriousness, good actions and good principles, the more we shall see the madness and stupidity of the one, and the true solid wisdom of the other. This is one of the distinctions. If we go on in our sins, we are not to expect to awaken to a joyful meeting with our friends, and relatives, and dear connexions. If we turn away from our sins, and take up religion in earnest, we may. My brethren, religion disarms even death. It disarms it of that which is its bitterness and its sting, the power of dividing those who are dear to one another. But this blessing, like every blessing which it promises, is only to the just and good, to the penitent and reformed, to those who are touched at the heart with a sense of its importance; who know thoroughly and experimentally, who feel in their inward mind and consciences, that religion is the only course that can end well; that can bring either them or theirs to the presence of God, blessed for evermore; that can cause them, after the toils of life and struggles of death are over, to meet again in a joyful deliverance from the grave; in a new and never ceasing happiness, in the presence and society of one another.

SERMON XXXV.

THE GENERAL RESURRECTION.

The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.—John v. 28, 29.

These words are so important, that if Jesus Christ had never delivered any other, if he had come into the world and pronounced only this simple declaration, and proved the *truth* and *certainty* of it by the miracles which he wrought, he would have left enough to have guided his followers to everlasting happiness: he would have done more towards making mankind virtuous and happy, than all the teachers and all the wisdom, that ever appeared upon earth, had done before him. We should each and every one of us have owed more to him for this single piece of intelligence, than we owe to our parents, our dearest friend, or the best benefactor we have. This text is the poor man's creed. It is his religion: it is to be imprinted upon his memory, and upon his heart: it is what the most simple can understand: it is what, when understood and believed, excels all the knowledge and learning in the universe: it is what we are to carry about with us in our thoughts; daily remember and daily reflect upon; remember not only at church, not only in our devotions, or in our set meditations, but in our business, our pleasures, in whatever we intend, plan, or execute, whatever we think about, or whatever we set about; remember, that "they that have done good, shall come unto the resurrection of life; they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Reflect what great things this short sentence contains. It teaches us, beyond contradiction, that all does not end here: that our happiness or misery is not over at our death; that a new state of things will begin with every one of us, and that in a short time. This point, I say, our Saviour proves beyond contradiction; and how does he prove it? By healing the sick, by restoring sight to the blind, by raising the dead, by various astonishing and incontestible miracles; and above all, by coming himself to life again, after being three days dead and buried, he *proved* that God Almighty was with him; that he came from God; that he knew what passed in the other world; that he had God's own authority to say and promise this to mankind. Upon the faith and trust of this promise, we know that we shall rise again; all are equally assured of it, from the highest to the lowest. Wise and learned men thought indeed the same thing before; they concluded it to be so from probable argument and reasonings; but this was not like having it, as we have it, from God himself; or, what is just the same thing, from the mouth of a person, to whom God gave witness by signs and wonders, and mighty deeds. They were far short of our certainty, who did study it the deepest. There were but few who could study or comprehend it at all. Blessed be God, we are all informed, we are all, from the most learned to the most ignorant, made sure and certain of it.

Having then this great doctrine secured, that we shall all come again into a new world and a new life, the next great point which every serious mind will turn to, the second grand question to be asked is, who are to be happy, and who will be miserable in that other state? The text satis-

fies us completely upon this head. You ask, who shall come to the resurrection of life? The text replies, they that have done good. Observe well, and never forget this answer. It is not the wise, the learned, the great, the honoured, the professor of this or that doctrine, the member of this church, or the maintainer of that article of faith, but *he* that doeth good; *he*, of whatever quality or condition, who strives honestly to make his life of service to those about him; to be useful in his calling, and to his generation; to his family, to his neighbourhood, and, according to his ability, to his country, and to mankind—"he that doeth good." All the rest, without this, goes for nothing: though he understand the things of religion ever so well, or believe ever so rightly; though he cry, Lord, Lord; be he ever so constant and devout in his prayers, or talk ever so much, or so well, or so earnestly for religion; unless he do good; unless his actions, and dealings, and behaviour come up to his knowledge and his discourse, correspond with his outward profession and belief, it will avail him nothing; he is not the man to whom Jesus Christ hath promised in the text, that he shall come to the resurrection of life. The issue of life and death is put upon our conduct and behaviour; that is, made the *test* we are to be tried by.

Again: When we read in Scripture, when we know from positive and undoubted authority, that misery and destruction, ruin, torment, and damnation, are reserved for some, it is surely the most natural, the most interesting of all inquiries, to know for whom.—The text tells us, "for them that have done evil."

Here let the timorous conscience take courage. It is not any man's errors, or ignorance; his want of understanding, or education, or ability, that will be laid to his charge at the day of judgment, or that will bring him into danger of the damnation which the Gospel threatens; it is *having done evil;* having wilfully gone about to disobey what he knew to be the will and command of his Creator, by committing mischief, and doing wrong and injury to his fellow-creatures.

Let the bold and presumptuous sinner hear this text with fear and trembling. Let him who cares not what misery he occasions, what evil and harm he does, if he can but compass his purpose, carry his own end, or serve his wicked lusts and pleasures; let him, I say, be given to understand, what he has to look for; "he that doeth evil shall come to the resurrection of damnation;" this is absolute, final, and peremptory; here is no exception, no excuse, no respect of person or condition.

They that have done good, shall come again unto the resurrection of life. But, alas! I hear you say, What good can I do? my means and my opportunities are too small and straitened to think of doing good.—You do not sufficiently reflect what doing good is. You are apt to confine the notion of it to giving to others, and giving liberally. This, no doubt, is right and meritorious; but it is certainly not in every man's power; comparatively speaking, it is indeed in the power of very few. But doing good is of a much more general nature; and is in a greater or less degree practicable by all; for, whenever we make one human creature happier or better than he would have been without our help, then we do good; and, when we do this from a proper motive, that is, with a sense and a desire of pleasing God by doing it, then we do good in the true sense of the text, and of God's gracious promise. Now let every one, in particular, reflect, whether, in this sense, he has not some good in his power: some within his own doors, to his family, his children, his kindred; by his labour, his authority, his example; by bringing them up, and keeping them in the way of passing their lives honestly, and quietly, and usefully. What good more important, more practicable than this is? Again, something may be done beyond our own household: by acts of tenderness and kindness, of help and compassion to our neighbours. Not a particle of this will be lost. It is all set down in the book of life; and happy are they who have much there. And again, if any of us be really sorry that we have not so much in our power as we would desire, let us remember this short rule, that since we can do little good, to take care that we do no harm. Let us show our sincerity by our innocence; that, at least, is always in our power.

Finally, Let us reflect, that in the habitations of life are many mansions; rewards of various orders and degrees, proportioned to our various degrees of virtue and exertion here. "He that soweth plenteously, shall reap plenteously." We can never do too much; never be too earnest in doing good; because every good action here will, we are certain, be an addition of happiness hereafter; will advance us to a better condition in the life to come, whatever be our lot or success in this. God will not fail of his promise. He hath commissioned his beloved Son to tell us, that they that have done good shall enter into the resurrection of life. Let us humbly and thankfully accept his gracious offer. We have but one business in this world. It is to strive to make us worthy of a better. Whatever this trial may cost us,—how long, how earnestly, how patiently soever,—through whatever difficulties,—by whatever toils we endeavour to obey and please our Maker, we are supported in them by this solid and never ceasing consolation, "that our labour is not in vain in the Lord."

THE END.

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